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MISCELLANIES.

BY

JOHN ARMSTRONG, M.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

L O N D O N:

MDCCLXX.



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THE author of the following pieces has at last taken the trouble upon him to collect them; and to have them printed under his own inspection. A task that he had long avoided; and to which he would hardly have submitted himself at last, but for the sake of preventing their being, some time hereafter, exposed in a ragged mangled condition, and loaded with more faults than they originally had: while it might be impossible for him, by the change perhaps of one letter, to recover a whole period from the most contemptible nonsense.

Along with such pieces as he had formerly offered to the public, he takes this opportunity of presenting it with several others; some of which had lain by him many years. What he had lost, and especially what he has destroyed,

would, probably enough, have been better received by the great majority of readers, than any thing he has published.

But he never courted the public. He wrote chiefly for his own amusement; and because he found it an agreeable and innocent way of sometimes passing an idle hour. He has always most heartily despised the opinion of the Mobility, from the lowest to the highest: and if it is true, what he has sometimes been told, that the best judges are on his side, he desires no more in the article of fame and renown as a writer. If the best judges of this age honour him with their approbation, all the worst too of the next will favour him with theirs; when by Heaven's grace he'll be too far beyond the reach of their unmeaning praises to receive any disgust from them.



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THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH:
A
POEM.

A



[7]

T H E

A R T

O F P R E S E R V I N G

H E A L T H.

B O O K I.

A I R.

DAUGHTER of Pæon, queen of every joy,
HYGEIA*; whose indulgent smile sustains
The various race luxuriant nature pours,
And on th' immortal essences bestows
Immortal youth; auspicious, O descend!
Thou chearful guardian of the rolling year,

* Hygeia, the goddess of health, was, according to the genealogy of the heathen deities, the daughter of Æsculapius; who, as well as Apollo, was distinguished by the name of Pæon.

Whether thou wanton'st on the western gale,
Or shak'st the rigid pinions of the north,
Diffusest life and vigour through the tracts
Of air, thro' earth, and ocean's deep domain. 10
When through the blue serenity of heaven
Thy power approaches, all the wasteful host
Of pain and sickness, squalid and deform'd,
Confounded sink into the loathsome gloom,
Where in deep Erebus involv'd the fiends 15
Grow more profane. Whatever shapes of death,
Shook from the hideous chambers of the globe,
Swarm thro' the shudd'ring air: whatever plagues
Or meagre famine breeds, or with flow wings
Rise from the putrid watry element, 20
The damp waste forest, motionless and rank,
That smothers earth and all the breathless winds,
Or the vile carnage of th' inhuman field;
Whatever baneful breathes the rotten South;
Whatever ills th' extremes or sudden change 25
Of cold and hot, or moist and dry produce;
They fly thy pure effulgence: they, and all
The secret poisons of avenging heaven,
And all the pale tribes halting in the train
Of Vice and heedless Pleasure: or if aught 30
The comet's glare amid the burning sky,
Mournful eclipse, or planets ill-combin'd,
Portend disastrous to the vital world;
Thy salutary power averts their rage,



PRESERVING HEALTH. 9

Averts the general bane : and but for thee 35
Nature would sicken, nature soon would die.

Without thy chearful active energy
No rapture swells the breast, no poet sings,
No more the maids of Helicon delight.
Come then with me, O Goddess heavenly gay !
Begin the song ; and let it sweetly flow, 41
And let it sweetly teach thy wholesome laws :
“ How best the fickle fabric to support
“ Of mortal man ; in healthful body how
“ A healthful mind the longest to maintain.” 45
’Tis hard, in such a strife of rules, to chuse
The best, and those of most extensive use ;
Harder in clear and animated song
Dry philosophic precepts to convey,
Yet with thy aid the secret wilds I trace 50
Of nature, and with daring steps proceed
Through paths the muses never trod before.

Nor should I wander doubtful of my way,
Had I the lights of that sagacious mind
Which taught to check the pestilential fire, 55
And quell the deadly Python of the Nile,
O thou belov’d by all the graceful arts,
Thou long the fav’rite of the healing powers,
Indulge, O MEAD ! a well-design’d essay,
Howe’er imperfect : and permit that I 60

My little knowlege with my country share,
Till you the rich Asclepian stores unlock,
And with new graces dignify the theme.

YE who amid the feverish world would wear
A body free of pain, of cares a mind ; 65
Fly the rank city, shun its turbid air ;
Breathe not the chaos of eternal smoke
And volatile corruption, from the dead,
The dying, sickning, and the living world
Exhal'd, to fully heaven's transparent dome 70
With dim mortality. It is not air
That from a thousand lungs reeks back to thine,
Sated with exhalations rank and fell,
The spoil of dunghills, and the putrid thaw
Of nature ; when from shape and texture she 75
Relapses into fighting elements ;
It is not air, but floats a nauseous mass
Of all obscene, corrupt, offensive things.
Much moisture hurts ; but here a fordid bath,
With oily rancour fraught, relaxes more 80
The solid frame than simple moisture can.
Besides, immur'd in many a fullen bay
That never felt the freshness of the breeze,
This slumbring Deep remains, and ranker grows
With sickly rest : and (tho' the lungs abhor 85
To drink the dun fuliginous abyfs)
Did not the acid vigour of the mine,

PRESERVING HEALTH. 11

Roll'd from so many thund'ring chimneys, tame
 The putrid steams that over swarm the sky;
 This caustic venom would perhaps corrode 90
 Those tender cells that draw the vital air,
 In vain with all their unctuous rills bedew'd;
 Or by the drunken venous tubes, that yawn
 In countless pores o'er all the pervious skin,
 Imbib'd would poison the balsamic blood, 95
 And rouse the heart to every fever's rage
 While yet you breathe, away; the rural wilds
 Invite; the mountains call you, and the vales;
 The woods, the streams, and each ambrosial breeze
 That fans the ever undulating sky; 100
 A kindly sky! whose soft'ring pow'r regales
 Man, beast, and all the vegetable reign.
 Find then some woodland scene where nature smiles
 Benign, where all her honest children thrive.
 To us there wants not many a happy seat; 105
 Look round the smiling land, such numbers rise
 We hardly fix, bewilder'd in our choice.
 See where enthron'd in adamantinè state,
 Proud of her bards, imperial Windsor sits;
 There chuse thy seat, in some aspiring grove 110
 Fast by the slowly-winding Thames; or where
 Broader she laves fair Richmond's green retreats,
 (Richmond that sees an hundred villas rise
 Rural or gay). O! from the summer's rage
 O! wrap me in the friendly gloom that hides 115

Umbrageous Ham ! But if the busy Town
 Attract thee still to toil for power or gold,
 Sweetly thou mayst thy vacant hours possess
 In Hampstead, courted by the western wind ;
 Or Greenwich, waving o'er the winding flood ; 120
 Or lose the world among the sylvan wilds
 Of Dulwich, yet by barbarous arts unspoil'd.
 Green rise the Kentish hills in chearful air ;
 But on the marshy plains that Essex spreads
 Build not, nor rest too long thy wand'ring feet. 125
 For on a rustic throne of dewy turf,
 With baneful fogs her aching temples bound,
 Quartana there presides : a meagre fiend
 Begot by Eurüs, when his brutal force
 Compress'd the slothful Naiad of the Fens. 130
 From such a mixture sprung, this fitful pest
 With fev'rish blasts subdues the sickning land ;
 Cold tremors come, with mighty love of rest,
 Convulsive yawnings, lassitude, and pains
 That sting the burden'd brows, fatigue the loins,
 And rack the joints, and every torpid limb ; 136
 Then parching heat succeeds, till copious sweats
 O'erflow : a short relief from former ills.
 Beneath repeated shocks the wretches pine ;
 The vigour sinks, the habit melts away ; 140
 The chearful, pure, and animated bloom
 Dies from the face, with squalid atrophy
 Devour'd, in fallow melancholy clad.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 13

And oft the Sorcerers, in her sated wrath,
 Relinquish them to the furies of her train ; 145
 The blotted Hydrops, and the yellow fiend
 Tint'd with her own accumulated gall.

In quest of sites, avoid the mournful plain
 Where osiers thrive, and trees that love the lake;
 Where many lazy muddy rivers flow : 150
 Nor for the wealth that all the Indies roll
 Fix near the marshy margin of the main.
 For from the humid soil and watry reign
 Eternal vapours rise ; the spongy air
 For ever weeps ; or turgid with the weight 155
 Of waters, pours a sounding deluge down.
 Skies such as these let ev'ry mortal shun
 Who dreads the dropsy, palsy, or the gout,
 Tertian, corrosive scurvy, or the moist catarrh ;
 Or any other injury that grows 160
 From raw-spun fibres idle and unstrung,
 Skin ill-perspiring, and the purple flood
 In languid eddies loitering into phlegm.

Yet not alone from humid skies we pine ;
 For Air may be too dry. The subtle heaven, 165
 That winnows into dust the blasted downs,
 Bare and extended wide without a stream,
 Too fast imbibes th' attenuated lymph
 Which, by the surface, from the blood exhales.

The lungs grow rigid, and with toil essay 170
 Their flexible vibrations; or inflam'd,
 Their tender ever-moving structure thaws.
 Spoil'd of its limpid vehicle, the blood
 A mass of lees remains, a drossy tide
 That flow as Lethe wanders thro' the veins; 175
 Unactive in the services of life,
 Unfit to lead its pitchy current through
 The secret mazy channels of the brain.
 The melancholic Fiend (that worst despair
 Of physic,) hence the rust-complexion'd man 180
 Pursues, whose blood is dry, whose fibres gain
 Too stretch'd a tone: and hence in climes adust
 So sudden tumults seize the trembling nerves,
 And burning fevers glow with double rage.

Fly, if you can, these violent extremes 185
 Of Air; the wholesome is nor moist nor dry.
 But as the power of chusing is deny'd
 To half mankind, a farther task ensues;
 How best to mitigate these fell extremes,
 How breathe unhurt the withering element, 190
 Or hazy atmosphere: though Custom moulds
 To ev'ry clime the soft Promethean clay;
 And he who first the fogs of Essex breath'd
 (So kind is native air) may in the fens
 Of Essex from inveterate ills revive 195
 At pure Montpelier or Bermuda caught.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 15

But if the raw and oozy heaven offend;
 Correct the soil, and dry the sources up
 Of watry exhalation; wide and deep
 Conduct your trenches through the quaking bog;
 Solicitous, with all your winding arts, 201
 Betray th' unwilling lake into the stream;
 And weed the forest, and invoke the winds
 To break the toils where strangled vapours lie;
 Or through the thickets send the crackling flames.
 Mean time at home with chearful fire dispel 206
 The humid air: and let your table smoke
 With solid roast or bak'd; or what the herds
 Of tamer breed supply; or what the wilds
 Yield to the toilsom pleasures of the chase. 210
 Generous your wine, the boast of ripening years,
 But frugal be your cups; the languid frame,
 Vapid and sunk from yesterday's debauch,
 Shrinks from the cold embrace of watry heavens.
 But neither these nor all Apollo's arts, 215
 Disarm the dangers of the dropping sky,
 Unless with exercise and manly toil
 You brace your nerves, and spur the lagging blood.
 The fat'ning clime let all the sons of ease
 Avoid; if indolence would wish to live. 220
 Go, yawn and loiter out the long slow year
 In fairer skies. If drougthy regions parch
 The skin and lungs, and bake the thickening blood;
 Deep in the waving forests chuse your seat,

Where fuming trees refresh the thirsty air; 225
And wake the fountains from their secret beds,
And into lakes dilate the rapid stream.
Here spread your gardens wide; and let the cool,
The moist relaxing vegetable store,
Prevail in each repast: Your food supplied 230
By bleeding life, be gently wasted down,
By soft decoction and a mellowing heat,
To liquid balm; or, if the solid mass
You chuse, tormented in the boiling wave;
That thro' the thirsty channels of the blood 235
A smooth diluted chyle may ever flow,
The fragrant dairy from its cool recess
Its nectar acid or benign will pour
To drown your thirst; or let the mantling bowl
Of keen Sherbet the fickle taste relieve. 240
For with the viscous blood the simple stream
Will hardly mingle; and fermented c ps
Oft dissipate more moisture than they give,
Yet when pale seasons rise, or winter rolls
His horrors o'er the world, thou may'st indulge 245
In feasts more genial, and impatient broach
The mellow cask. Then too the scourging air
Provokes to keener toils than sultry droughts
Allow. But rarely we such skies blaspheme.
Steep'd in continual rains, or with raw fogs 250
Bedew'd, our Seasons droop: incumbent still
A ponderous heaven o'erwhelms the sinking soul,

PRESERVING HEALTH. 17

Lab'ring with storms in heapy mountains rise
 Th' imbattled clouds, as if the Stygian shades
 Had left the dungeon of eternal night, 255
 Till black with thunder all the South descends.
 Scarce in a showerless day the heavens indulge
 Our melting clime; except the baleful East
 Withers the tender spring, and sourly checks
 The fancy of the year. Our fathers talk 260
 Of summers, balmy airs, and skies serene.
 Good heaven! for what unexpiated crimes
 This dismal change! The brooding elements
 Do they, your powerful ministers of wrath,
 Prepare some fierce exterminating plague? 265
 Or is it fix'd in the Decrees above
 That lofty Albion melt into the main?
 Indulgent nature! O dissolve this gloom!
 Bind in eternal adamant the winds
 That drown or wither: Give the genial West 270
 To breathe, and in its turn the sprightly North:
 And may once more the circling seasons rule
 The year; not mix in every monstrous day.

Mean time, the moist malignity to shun
 Of burthen'd skies; mark where the dry champain
 Swells into chearful hills; where Marjoram 275
 And Thyme, the love of bees, perfume the air;
 And where the * Cynorrhodon with the rose

* The wild rose or that which grows on the common briar.

For fragrance vies; for in the thirsty soil
 Most fragrant breathe the aromatic tribes. 280
 There bid thy roofs high on the basking steep
 Ascend, there light thy hospitable fires.
 And let them see the winter morn arise,
 The summer evening blushing in the west;
 While with umbrageous oaks the ridge behind 285
 O'erhung, defends you from the blust'ring north,
 And bleak affliction of the peevish east.
 O! when the growling winds contend, and all
 The sounding forest fluctuates in the storm;
 To sink in warm repose, and hear the din 290
 Howl o'er the steady battlements, delights
 Above the luxury of vulgar sleep.
 The murmuring rivulet, and the hoarser strain
 Of waters rushing o'er the slippery rocks,
 Will nightly lull you to ambrosial rest. 295
 To please the fancy is no trifling good,
 Where health is studied; for whatever moves
 The mind with calm delight, promotes the just
 And natural movements of th' harmonious frame.
 Besides, the sportive brook for ever shakes 300
 The trembling air; that floats from hill to hill,
 From vale to mountain, with incessant change
 Of purest element, refreshing still
 Your airy seat, and uninfected Gods.
 Chiefly for this I praise the man who builds 305

High on the breezy ridge, whose lofty sides
 Th' etherial deep with endless billows chafes.
 His purer mansion nor contagious years
 Shall reach, nor deadly putrid air's annoy.

But may no fogs, from lake or fenny plain, 310
 Involve my hill! And wheresoe'er you build;
 Whether on sun-burnt Epsom, or the plains
 Wash'd by the silent Lee; in Chelsea low,
 Or high Blackheath with wintry winds assail'd;
 Dry be your house: but airy more than warm. 315
 Else every breath of ruder wind will strike
 Your tender body thro' with rapid pains; [voice,
 Fierce coughs will teize you, hoarseness bind your
 Or moist Gravedo load your aching brows.
 These to defy, and all the fates that dwell 320
 In cloister'd air, tainted with steaming life,
 Let lofty ceilings grace your ample rooms;
 And still at azure noontide may your dome
 At every window drink the liquid sky.

Need we the funny situation here, 325
 And theatres open to the south, commend?
 Here, where the morning's misty breath infests
 More than the torrid noon? How sickly grow,
 How pale, the plants in those ill-fated vales
 That, circled round with the gigantic heap 330
 Of mountains, never felt, nor ever hope

To feel, the genial vigor of the sun !
While on the neighbouring hill the rose inflames
The verdant spring ; in virgin beauty blows
The tender lily, languishingly sweet ; 335
O'er every hedge the wanton woodbine roves,
And autumn ripens in the summer's ray.
Nor less the warmer living tribes demand
The soft'ring sun : whose energy divine
Dwells not in mortal fire ; whose gen'rous heat 340
Glows thro' the mass of grosser elements,
And kindles into life the ponderous spheres.
Chear'd by thy kind invigorating warmth,
We court thy beams, great majesty of day !
If not the soul, the regent of this world, 345
First-born of heaven, and only less than God !

T H E
A R T
OF PRESERVING
H E A L T H.
B O O K II.
D I E T.

ENOUGH of Air. A desert subject now,
 Rougher and wilder, rises to my sight.
 A barren waste, where not a garland grows
 To bind the Muse's brow; not ev'n a proud
 Stupendous solitude frowns o'er the heath, 5
 To rouse a noble horror in the soul:
 But rugged paths fatigue, and error leads
 Through endless labyrinths the devious feet.
 Farewel, ethereal fields! the humbler arts
 Of life; the table of the homely Gods, 10
 Demand my song. Elysian gales adieu!

The blood, the fountain whence the spirits flow,
 The generous stream that waters every part,
 And motion, vigour, and warm life conveys
 To every particle that moves or lives ; 15
 This vital fluid, through unnumber'd tubes
 Pour'd by the heart, and to the heart again
 Refunded ; scourg'd for ever round and round ;
 Enrag'd with heat and toil, at last forgets
 Its balmy nature ; virulent and thin 20
 It grows ; and now, but that a thousand gates
 Are open to its flight, it would destroy
 The parts it cherish'd and repair'd before.
 Besides, the flexible and tender tubes
 Melt in the mildest, most nectareous tide 25
 That ripening nature rolls ; as in the stream
 Its crumbling banks ; but what the vital force
 Of plastic fluids hourly batters down,
 That very force, those plastic particles
 Rebuild : so mutable the state of man. 30
 For this the watchful appetite was giv'n,
 Daily with fresh materials to repair
 This unavoidable expence of life,
 This necessary waste of flesh and blood.
 Hence the concoctive powers, with various art, 35
 Subdue the cruder aliments to chyle ;
 The chyle to blood ; the foamy purple tide
 To liquors, which through finer arteries
 To different parts their winding course pursue ;

PRESERVING HEALTH. 23

To try new changes, and new forms put on, 40
Or for the public, or some private use.

Nothing so foreign but th'athletic hind
Can labour into blood. The hungry meal
Alone he fears, or aliments too thin ;
By violent powers too easily subdu'd, 45
Too soon expell'd. His daily labour thaws,
To friendly chyle, the most rebellious mass
That salt can harden, or the smoke of years ;
Nor does his gorge the rancid bacon rue,
Nor that which Cestria sends, tenacious paste 50
Of solid milk. But ye of softer clay,
Infirm and delicate ! and ye who waste
With pale and bloated sloth the tedious day !
Avoid the stubborn aliment, avoid
The full repast ; and let sagacious age 55
Grow wiser, lesson'd by the dropping teeth.

Half subtiliz'd to chyle, the liquid food
Readiest obeys th'affimilating powers ;
And soon the tender vegetable mass
Relents ; and soon the young of those that tread
The stedfast earth, or cleave the green abyss, 61
Or pathless sky. And if the steer must fall,
In youth and sanguine vigour let him die ;
Nor stay till rigid age, or heavy ails,
Absolve him ill requited from the yoke. 65

Some with high forage, and luxuriant ease,
Indulge the veteran ox; but wiser thou,
From the bald mountain or the barren downs,
Expect the flocks by frugal nature fed;
A race of purer blood, with exercise 70
Refin'd and scanty fare: For, old or young,
The stall'd are never healthy; nor the cram'd,
Not all the culinary arts can tame
To wholesome food, the abominable growth
Of rest and gluttony; the prudent taste 75
Rejects with bane such loathsome lusciousness.
The languid stomach curses even the pure
Delicious fat, and all the race of oil:
For more the oily aliments relax
Its feeble tone; and with the eager lymph 80
(Fond to incorporate with all it meets)
Coily they mix, and shun with slippery wiles
The woo'd embrace. Th' irresoluble oil,
So gentle late and blandishing, in floods
Of rancid bile o'erflows: what tumults hence, 85
What horrors rise, were nauseous to relate.
Chuse leaner viands, ye whose jovial make
Too fast the gummy nutriment imbibes:
Chuse sober meals; and rouse to active life
Your cumbrous clay; nor on th' infeebling down,
Irresolute, protract the morning hours. 91
But let the man whose bones are thinly clad,
With chearful ease and succulent repast

PRESERVING HEALTH. 25

Improve his slender habit. Each extreme
From the blest mean of sanity departs. 95

I could relate what table this demands,
Or that complexion ; what the various powers
Of various foods : but fifty years would roll,
And fifty more, before the tale were done.
Besides there often lurks some nameless, strange,
Peculiar thing ; nor on the skin display'd, 101
Felt in the pulse, nor in the habit seen ;
Which finds a poison in the food that most
The temp'ature affects. There are, whose blood
Impetuous rages through the turgid veins, 105
Who better bear the fiery fruits of Ind
Than the moist Melon, or pale Cucumber.
Of chilly nature others fly the board
Supply'd with slaughter, and the vernal powers
For cooler, kinder, sustenance implore.
Some even the generous nutriment detest 110
Which, in the shell, the sleeping embryo rears.
Some, more unhappy still, repent the gifts
Of Pales ; soft, delicious, and benign :
The balmy quintessence of every flower,
And every grateful herb that decks the spring ;
The soft'ring dew of tender sprouting life ; 116
The best refection of declining age ;
The kind restorative of those that lie
Half-dead and panting, from the doubtful strife

Of nature struggling in the grasp of death. 120
Try all the bounties of this fertile globe,
There is not such a salutary food
As suits with every stomach. But (except,
Amid the mingled mass of fish and fowl,
And boil'd and bak'd, you hesitate by which 125
You sunk oppress'd, or whether not by all ;)
Taught by experience soon you may discern
What pleases, what offends. Avoid the cates
That lull the sicken'd appetite too long ;
Or heave with feverish flushings all the face, 130
Burn in the palms, and parch the roughning tongue ;
Or much diminish or too much increase
Th'expende, which nature's wise œconomy,
Without or waste or avarice, maintains.
Such cates abjur'd, let prouling hunger loose, 135
And bid the curious palate roam at will ;
They scarce can err amid the various stores
That burst the teeming entrails of the world.

Led by sagacious taste, the ruthless king
Of beasts on blood and slaughter only lives ; 140
The tiger, form'd alike to cruel meals,
Would at the manger starve : of milder seeds
The generous horse to herbage and to grain
Confines his wish ; though fabling Greece resound
The Thracian steeds with human carnage wild.
Prompted by instinct's never-erring power, 146

Each creature knows its proper aliment ;
 But man, th' inhabitant of every clime,
 With all the commoners of nature feeds.
 Directed, bounded, by this power within, 150
 Their cravings are well-aim'd: voluptuous man
 Is by superior faculties misled ;
 Misled from pleasure even in quest of joy.
 Sated with nature's boons, what thousands seek,
 With dishes tortured from their native taste, 155
 And mad variety, to spurn beyond
 Its wiser will the jaded appetite !
 Is this for pleasure ? Learn a juster taste ;
 And know, that temperance is true luxury.
 Or is it pride ? Pursue some nobler aim. 160
 Dismiss your parasites, who praise for hire ;
 And earn the fair esteem of honest men,
 Whose praise is fame. Form'd of such clay as yours,
 The sick, the needy, shiver at your gates.
 Even modest want may bless your hand unseen, 165
 Though hush'd in patient wretchedness at home.
 Is there no virgin, grac'd with every charm
 But that which binds the mercenary vow ?
 No youth of genius, whose neglected bloom
 Unfoster'd sickens in the barren shade ? 170
 No worthy man, by fortune's random blows,
 Or by a heart too generous and humane,
 Constrain'd to leave his happy natal seat,
 And sigh for wants more bitter than his own ?

There are, while human miseries abound, 175
A thousand ways to waste superfluous wealth,
Without one fool or flatterer at your board,
Without one hour of sickness or disgust.

But other ills th' ambiguous feast pursue,
Besides provoking the lascivious taste. 180
Such various foods, though harmless each alone,
Each other violate; and oft we see
What strife is brew'd, and what pernicious bane,
From combinations of innoxious things.
Th' unbounded taste I mean not to confine 185
To hermit's diet, needlessly severe.
But would you long the sweets of health enjoy,
Or husband pleasure; at one impious meal
Exhaust not half the bounties of the year,
Of every realm. It matters not mean while 190
How much to-morrow differ from to-day;
So far indulge: 'tis fit, besides, that man,
To change obnoxious, be to change inur'd.
But stay the curious appetite, and taste
With caution fruits you never tried before. 195
For want of use the kindest aliment
Sometimes offends; while custom tames the rage
Of poison to mild amity with life.

So heav'n has form'd us to the general taste
Of all its gifts; so custom has improv'd 200
This bent of nature; that few simple foods,

PRESERVING HEALTH. 29

Of all that earth, or air, or ocean yield,
 But by excess offend. Beyond the sense
 Of light refection, at the genial board
 Indulge not often ; nor protract the feast 205
 To dull satiety ; till soft and slow
 A drowzy death creeps on, th' expansive soul
 Oppress'd, and smother'd the celestial fire.
 The stomach, urg'd beyond its active tone,
 Hardly to nutrimental chyle subdues 210
 The softest food : unfinished and deprav'd,
 The chyle, in all its future wanderings, owns
 Its turbid fountain ; not by purer streams
 So to be clear'd, but foulness will remain.
 To sparkling wine what ferment can exalt 215
 The unripen'd grape ? Or what mechanic skill
 From the crude ore can spin the ductile gold ?

Gross riot treasures up a wealthy fund
 Of plagues : but more immedicable ills
 Attend the lean extreme. For physic knows 220
 How to disburden the too tumid veins,
 Even how to ripen the half-labour'd blood :
 But to unlock the elemental tubes,
 Collaps'd and shrunk with long inanity,
 And with balsamic nutriment repair 225
 The dried and worn-out habit, were to bid
 Old age grow green, and wear a second spring ;
 Or the tall ash, long ravish'd from the soil,

D

Through wither'd veins imbibe the vernal dew.
 When hunger calls, obey; nor often wait 230
 Till hunger sharpen to corrosive pain:
 For the keen appetite will feast beyond
 What nature well can bear; and one extreme
 Ne'er without danger meets its own reverse.
 Too greedily th' exhausted veins absorb 235
 The recent chyle, and load enfeebled powers
 Oft to th' extinction of the vital flame.
 To the pale cities, by the firm-set siege.
 And famine humbled, may this verse be borne;
 And hear, ye hardiest sons that Albion breeds 240
 Long tofs'd and famish'd on the winter main;
 The war shook off, or hospitable shore
 Attain'd, with temperance bear the shock of joy;
 Nor crown with festive rites th' auspicious day:
 Such feast might prove more fatal than the waves,
 Than war or famine. While the vital fire 246
 Burns feebly, heap not the green fuel on;
 But prudently foment the wandering spark
 With what the soonest feels its kindred touch:
 Be frugal ev'n of that: a little give 250
 At first; that kindled, add a little more;
 Till, by deliberate nourishing, the flame
 Reviv'd, with all its wonted vigour glows.

But tho' the two (the full and the jejune)
 Extremes have each their vice; it much avails 255

PRESERVING HEALTH. 31

Ever with gentle tide to ebb and flow
 From this to that: So nature learns to bear
 Whatever chance or headlong appetite
 May bring. Besides, a meagre day subdues
 The cruder clods by sloth or luxury 160
 Collected, and unloads the wheels of life.
 Sometimes a coy aversion to the feast
 Comes on, while yet no blacker omen lours;
 Then is a time to shun the tempting board,
 Were it your natal or your nuptial day. 265
 Perhaps a fast so seasonable starves
 The latent seeds of woe, which rooted once
 Might cost you labour. But the day return'd
 Of festal luxury, the wise indulge
 Most in the tender vegetable breed: 270
 Then chiefly when the summer beams inflame
 The brazen heavens; or angry Sirius sheds
 A feverish taint thro' the still gulph of air.
 The moist cool viands then, and flowing cup
 From the fresh dairy-virgin's liberal hand, 275
 Will save your head from harm, tho' round the world
 The dreaded * Causos roll his wasteful fires.
 Pale humid Winter loves the generous board,
 The meal more copious, and a warmer fare;
 And longs with old wood and old wine to cheer
 His quaking heart, The seasons which divide 281

* The burning fever.

Th' empires of heat and cold ; by neither claim'd,
Influenc'd by both ; a middle regimen
Impose. Thro' autumn's languishing domain
Descending, nature by degrees invites 285
To glowing luxury. But from the depth
Of winter when th' invigorated year
Emerges ; when Favonius flush'd with love,
Toyful and young, in every breeze descends
More warm and wanton on his kindling bride ; 290
Then, shepherds, then begin to spare your flocks ;
And learn, with wise humanity, to check
The lust of blood. Now pregnant earth commits
A various offspring to th' indulgent sky :
Now bounteous nature feeds with lavish hand 295
The prone creation ; yields what once suffic'd
Their dainty sovereign, when the world was young ;
Ere yet the barbarous thirst of blood had seiz'd
The human breast. Each rolling month matures
The food that suits it most ; so does each clime. 300

Far in the horrid realms of winter, where
Th' establish'd ocean heaps a monstrous waste
Of shining rocks and mountains to the pole ;
There lives a hardy race, whose plainest wants
Relentless earth, their cruel step-mother, 305
Regards not. On the waste of iron fields,
Untam'd, intractable, no harvests wave :
Pomona hates them, and the clownish God

PRESERVING HEALTH. 33

Who tends the garden. In the frozen world
 Such cooling gifts were vain: a fitter meal 310
 Is earn'd with ease; for her the fruitful spawn
 Of Ocean swarms, and heaps their genial board
 With generous fare and luxury profuse.
 These are their bread, the only bread they know;
 These, and their willing slave the deer, that crops
 The shrubby herbage on their meagre hills, 316
 Or scales, for fattening moss, the savage rocks.
 Girt by the burning Zone, not thus the South
 Her swarthy sons, in either Ind, maintains:
 Or thirsty Libya; from whose fervid loins
 The lion bursts, and every fiend that roams 320
 Th' affrighted wilderness. The mountain herd,
 Adult and dry, no sweet repast affords;
 Nor does the tepid main such kinds produce,
 So perfect, so delicious, as the shoals
 Of icy Zembla. Rashly where the blood 325
 Brews feverish frays; where scarce the tubes sustain
 Its tumid fervour and tempestuous course;
 Kind Nature tempts not to such gifts as these.
 But herein livid ripeness melts the Grape:
 Here, finish'd by invigorating suns, 330
 Thro' the green shade the golden Orange glows:
 Spontaneous here the torgid Melon yields
 A generous pulp; the Coco swells on high
 With milky riches; and in horrid mail
 The crisp Ananas wraps its poinant sweets. 335

Earth's vaunted progeny: In ruder air
Too coy to flourish, even too proud to live;
Or hardly rais'd by artificial fire
To vapid life. Here with a mother's smile
Glade Amalthea pours her copious horn. 340
Here buxom Ceres reigns: Th' autumnal sea
In boundless billows fluctuates o'er their plains.
What suits the climate best, what suits the men,
Nature profuses most, and most the taste
Demands. The fountain, edg'd with racy wine 345
Or acid fruit, bedews their thirsty souls.
The breeze eternal breathing round their limbs
Supports in else intolerable air:
While the cool Palm, the Plantain, and the grove
That waves on gloomy Lebanon, assuage 350
The torrid hell that beams upon their heads.

Now come, ye Naiads, to the fountains lead;
Now let me wander through your gelid reign.
I burn to view th' enthusiastic wilds
By mortal else untrod. I hear the din 355
Of waters thundering o'er the ruin'd cliffs.
With holy reverence I approach the rocks
Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.
Here from the desert down the rumbling steep
First springs the Nile; here bursts the founding Po
In angry waves; Euphrates hence devolves 361
A mighty flood to water half the East;

PRESERVING HEALTH. 35

And there, in Gothic solitude reclin'd,
The chearless Tanais pours his hoary urn. 364
What solemn twilight ! What stupendous shades
Enwrap these infant floods ! Thro' every nerve
A sacred horror thrills, a pleasing fear
Glides o'er my frame. The forest deepens round ;
And more gigantic still th' impending trees
Stretch their extravagant arms athwart the gloom.
Are these the confines of some fairy world ? 371
A land of Genii ? Say, beyond these wilds
What unknown nations ? If indeed beyond
Aught habitable lies. And whether leads,
To what strange regions, or of bliss or pain, 375
That subterraneous way ? Propitious maids,
Conduct me, while with fearful steps I tread
This trembling ground. The task remains to sing
Your gifts (so Pæon, so the powers of health
Command) to praise your crystal element : 380
The chief ingredient in heaven's various works ;
Whose flexile genius sparkles in the gem,
Grows firm in oak, and fugitive in wine ;
The vehicle, the source, of nutriment
And life, to all that vegetate or live. 385

O comfortable streams ! with eager lips
And trembling hand the languid thirsty quaff
New life in you ; fresh vigour fills your veins.
No warmer cups the rural ages knew ;

None warmer fought the fires of human kind, 390
 Happy in temperate peace ! Their equal days
 Felt not th' alternate fits of feverish mirth,
 And sick dejection. Still serene and pleas'd,
 They knew no pains but what the tender soul
 With pleasure yields to, and would ne'er forget.
 Blest with divine immunity from ails, 399
 Long centuries they liv'd ; their only fate
 Was ripe old age, and rather sleep than death.
 Oh ! could those worthies from the world of Gods
 Return to visit their degenerate sons, 400
 How would they scorn the joys of modern time,
 With all our art and toil improv'd to pain !
 Too happy they ! But wealth brought luxury,
 And luxury on sloth begot disease.

[disdain

Learn temperance, friends ; and hear without
 The choice of Water. Thus the Coan* sage 406
 Opin'd, and thus the learn'd of every school.
 What least of foreign principles partakes
 Is best : the lightest then ; what bears the touch
 Of fire the least, and soonest mounts in air ; 410
 The most insipid ; the most void of smell.
 Such the rude mountain from his horrid sides
 Pours down ; such waters in the sandy vale
 For ever boil, alike of winter frosts

* Hippocrates.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 37

And summer's heat secure. The crystal stream,
 O'er rocks resounding, or for many a mile 416
 Hurl'd down the pebbly channel, wholesome yields
 And mellow draughts; except when winter thaws,
 And half the mountains melt into the tide.
 Though thirst were ne'er so resolute, avoid 420
 The fordid lake, and all such drowfy floods
 As fill from Lethe Belgia's flow canals;
 (With rest corrupt, with vegetation green;
 Squalid with generation, and the birth
 Of little monsters;) till the power of fire 425
 Has from profane embraces disengag'd
 The violated lymph. The virgin stream
 In boiling wastes its finer soul in air.

Nothing like simple element dilutes
 The food, or gives the chyle so soon to flow. 330
 But where the stomach, indolently given,
 Toys with its duty, animate with wine
 Th' insipid stream: the golden Ceres yields
 A more voluptuous, a more sprightly draught;
 Perhaps more active. Wine unmix'd, and all 435
 The gluey floods that from the vex'd abyfs
 Of fermentation spring; with spirit fraught,
 And furious with intoxicating fire;
 Retard concoction, and preserve unthaw'd
 Th' embodied mass. You see what countless years,
 Embalm'd in fiery quintessence of wine, 441

The puny wonders of the reptile world,
 The tender rudiments of life, the slim
 Unravellings of minute anatomy, 454
 Maintain their texture, and unchang'd remain.

We curse not wine : the vile excess we blame ;
 More fruitful, than th' accumulated board,
 Of pain and misery. For the subtle draught
 Faster and surer swells the vital tide ;
 And with more active poison, than the floods 460
 Of grosser crudity convey, pervades
 The far-remote meanders of our frame.
 Ah ! sly deceiver ! Branded o'er and o'er,
 Yet still believ'd ! Exulting o'er the wreck
 Of sober views ! --- But the Parnassian maids 465
 Another time *, perhaps, shall sing the joys,
 The fatal charms, the many woes of wine ;
 Perhaps its various tribes, and various powers.

Mean time, I would not always dread the bowl,
 Nor every trespass shun. The feverish strife, 470
 Rous'd by the rare debauch, subdues, expells
 The loitering crudities that burden life ;
 And, like a torrent full and rapid, clears
 Th' obstructed tubes. Besides, this restless world
 Is full of chances, which by habit's power 475
 To learn to bear is easier than to shun.
 Ah ! when ambition, meagre love of gold,

* See Book iv.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 39

Or sacred country calls, with mellowing wine
 To moisten well the thirsty suffrages;
 Say how, unseason'd to the midnight frays 480
 Of Comus and his rout, wilt thou contend
 With Centaurs long to hardy deeds inur'd?
 Then learn to revel; but by slow degrees:
 By slow degrees the liberal arts are won;
 And Hercules grew strong. But when you smooth
 The brows of care, indulge your festive vein 486
 In cups by well-inform'd experience found
 The least your bane: and only with your friends.
 There are sweet follies; frailties to be seen
 By friends alone, and men of generous minds.

Oh! seldom may the fated hours return 491
 Of drinking deep! I would not daily taste,
 Except when life declines, even sober cups.
 Weak withering age no rigid law forbid,
 With frugal nectar, smooth and flow with balm,
 The sapless habit daily to bedew, 396
 And give the hesitating wheels of life
 Gliblier to play. But youth has better joys:
 And is it wise when youth with pleasure flows,
 To squander the reliefs of age and pain? 500

What dextrous thousands just within the goal
 Of wild debauch direct their nightly course!
 Perhaps no sickly qualms bedim their days,

No morning admonitions shock the head.
 But, ah ! what woes remain ! life rolls apace, 505
 And that incurable disease old age,
 In youthful bodies more severely felt,
 More sternly active, shakes their blasted prime :
 Except kind nature by some hasty blow
 Prevent the lingering fates. For know, whate'er
 Beyond its natural fervour hurries on 511
 The sanguine tide ; whether the frequent bowl,
 High-season'd fare, or exercise to toil
 Protracted ; spurs to its last stage tir'd life,
 And sows the temples with untimely snow. 515
 When life is new, the ductile fibres feel
 The heart's increasing force ; and, day by day,
 The growth advances ; till the larger tubes,
 Acquiring (from their * elemental veins,
 Condens'd to solid chords) a firmer tone,
 Sustain, and just sustain, th' impetuous blood. 520
 Here stops the growth. With overbearing pulse
 And pressure, still the great destroy the small ;

* In the human body, as well as in those of other animals, the larger blood vessels are composed of smaller ones ; which, by the violent motion and pressure of the fluids in the large vessels, lose their cavities by degrees, and degenerate into impervious chords or fibres. In proportion as these small vessels become solid, the larger must of course grow less extensible, more rigid, and make a stronger resistance to the action of the heart, and force of the blood. From this gradual condensation of the smaller vessels, and consequent rigidity of the larger one, the progress of the human body, from infancy to old age, is accounted for.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 41

Still with the ruins of the small grow strong,
 Life glows meantime, amid the grinding force
 Of viscous fluids and elastic tubes; 525
 Its various functions vigorously are plied
 By strong machinery; and in solid health
 The man confirm'd long triumphs o'er disease.
 But the full ocean ebbs: there is a point,
 By nature fix'd, whence life must downward tend.
 For still the beating tide consolidates 531
 The stubborn vessels, more reluctant still
 To the weak throbs of th' ill-supported heart.
 This languishing, these strength'ning by degrees
 To hard unyielding unelastic bone, 535
 Through tedious channels the congealing flood
 Crawls lazily, and hardly wanders on;
 It loiters still: and now it stirs no more.
 This is the period few attain; the death
 Of nature; thus (so heav'n ordain'd it) life 540
 Destroys itself; and could these laws have chang'd,
 Nestor might now the fates of Troy relate;
 And Homer live immortal as his song.

[stood

What does not fade? The tower that long had
 The crush of thunder and the warring winds, 545
 Shook by the slow but sure destroyer Time,
 Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er it base.
 And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass,
 Descend: the Babylonian spires are sunk;

Achaia, Rome, and Egypt moulder down. 550
 Time shakes the stable tyranny of thrones,
 And tottering empires rush by their own weight.
 This huge rotundity we trade grows old ;
 And all those worlds that roll around the sun,
 The Sun himself, shall die ; and antient Night 555
 Again involve the desolate abyfs :
 Till the great FATHER thro' the lifeless gloom
 Extend his arm to light another world,
 And bid new planets roll by other laws.
 For thro' the regions of unbounded space, 560
 Where unconfin'd Omnipotence has room,
 BEING, in various systems, fluctuates still
 Between creation and abhorr'd decay :
 It ever did ; perhaps and ever will.
 New worlds are still emerging from the deep ; 565
 The old descending, in their turns to rise.

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H E A L T H.

B O O K III.

E X E R C I S E.

THRO' various toils th' adventurous Muse
has past;

But half the toil, and more than half, remains!

Rude is her theme, and hardly fit for Song;

Plain, and of little ornament; and I

But little practis'd in th' Aonian arts. 5

Yet not in vain such labours have we tried,

If aught these lays the fickle health confirm.

To you, ye delicate, I write; for you

I tame my youth to philosophic cares,

And grow still paler by the midnight lamps. 10

Not to debilitate with midnight rules
 A hardy frame ; nor needlessly to brave
 Unglorious dangers, proud of mortal strength ;
 Is all the lesson that in wholesome years
 Concerns the strong. His care were ill bestow'd
 Who would with warm effeminacy nurse 16
 The thriving oak which on the mountain's brow
 Bears all the blasts that sweep the wintry heav'n.

Behold the labourer of the glebe, who toils
 In dust, in rain, in cold and sultry skies : 20
 Save but the grain from mildews and the flood,
 Nought anxious he what sickly stars ascend.
 He knows no laws by Esculapius given ;
 He studies none. Yet him nor midnight fogs
 Infest, nor those envenom'd shafts that fly 25
 When rapid Sirius fires th' autumnal noon.
 His habit pure with plain and temperate meals,
 Robust with labour, and by custom steel'd
 To every casualty of varied life ;
 Serene he bears the peevish eastern blast 30
 And uninfected breathes the mortal South.

Such the reward of rude and sober life ;
 Of labour such. By health the peasant's toil
 Is well repaid ; if exercise were pain
 Indeed, and temperance pain. By arts like these
 Laconia nurs'd of old her hardy sons ; 36

PRESERVING HEALTH. 45

And Rome's unconquer'd legions urg'd their way,
Unhurt, through every toil in every clime.

Toil, and be strong. By toil the flaccid nerves
Grow firm, and gain a more compacted tone; 40
The greener juices are by toil subdu'd,
Mellow'd, and subtilis'd; the vapid old
Expell'd, and all the rancour of the blood.
Come, my companionous, ye who feel the charms
Of nature and the year; come, let us stray 45
Where chance or fancy leads our roving walk:
Come, while the soft voluptuous breezes fan
The fleecy heavens, enwrap the limbs in balm,
And shed a charming languor o'er the soul.
Nor when bright Winter sows with prickly frost
The vigorous ether, in unmanly warmth
Indulge at home; nor even when Eurys' blasts
This way and that convolve the lab'ring woods.
My liberal walks, save when the skies in rain
Or fogs relent, no season should confine 55
Or to the cloister'd gallery or arcade.
Go, climb the mountain; from th' ethereal source
Imbibe the recent gale. The chearful morn
Beams o'er the hills; go, mount th' exulting steed.
Already, see, the deep-mouth'd beagles catch 60
The tainted mazes; and, on eager sport
Intent, with emulous impatience try
Each doubtful trace. Or, if a nobler prey

Delight you more, go chase the desperate deer ;
 And through its deepest solitudes awake 65
 The vocal forest with the jovial horn.

But if the breathless chase o'er hill and dale
 Exceed your strength ; a sport of less fatigue,
 Not less delightful, the prolific stream
 Affords. The crystal rivulet, that o'er 70
 A stony channel rolls its rapid maze,
 Swarms with the silver fry. Such, thro' the bounds
 Of pastoral Stafford, runs the brawling Trent ;
 Such Eden, sprung from Cumbrian mountains ; such
 The Esk, o'erhung with woods ; and such the stream
 On whose Arcadian banks I first drew air, 76
 Liddal ; till now, except in Doric lays
 Tun'd to her murmurs by her love-sick swains,
 Unknown in song : though not a purer stream,
 Thro' meads more flowery, or more romantic groves,
 Rolls toward the western main. Hail, sacred flood !
 May still thy hospitable swains be blest
 In rural innocence ; thy mountains still
 Teem with the fleecy race ; thy tuneful woods
 For ever flourish ; and thy vales look gay 85
 With painted meadows, and the golden grain !
 Oft, with thy blooming sons, when life was new
 Sportive and petulant, and charm'd with toys,
 In thy transparent eddies have I lav'd :
 Oft trac'd with patient steps thy fairy banks, 90

PRESERVING HEALTH. 47

With the well-imitated fly to hook
 The eager trout, and with the slender line
 And yielding rod sollicit to the shore
 The struggling panting prey ; while vernal clouds
 And tepid gales obscur'd the ruffled pool, 95
 And from the deeps call'd forth the wanton swarms.

Form'd on the Samian school, or those of Ind,
 There are who think these pastimes scarce humane,
 Yet in my mind (and not relentless I)
 His life is pure that wears no fouler stains. 100
 But if thro' genuine tenderness of heart,
 Or secret want of relish for the game,
 You shun the glories of the chace, nor care
 To haunt the peopled stream ; the garden yields
 A soft amusement, an humane delight. 105
 To raise th' insipid nature of the ground ;
 Or tame its savage genius to the grace
 Of careless sweet rusticity, that seems
 The amiable result of happy chance,
 Is to create ; and gives a god-like joy, 110
 Which every year improves. Nor thou disdain
 To check the lawless riot of the trees,
 To plant the grove, or turn the barren mould,
 O happy he ! whom, when his years decline,
 (His fortune and his fame by worthy means 115
 Attain'd, and equal to his moderate mind ;
 His life approv'd by all the wise and good,

Even envied by the vain) the peaceful groves
Of Epicurus, from this stormy world,
Receive to rest ; of all ungrateful cares 120
Absolv'd, and sacred from the selfish crowd,
Happiest of men ! if the same soil invites
A chosen few, companions of his youth,
Once fellow-rakes perhaps, now rural friends ; 125
Nature's free charms, and vie for sylvan fame :
A fair ambition ; void of strife or guile,
Or jealousy, or pain to be outdone.
Who plans th' enchanted garden, who directs
The vistor best, and best conducts the stream ; 130
Whose groves the fastest thicken and ascend ;
Who first the welcome spring salutes ; who shews
The earliest bloom, the sweetest proudest charms
Of Flora ; who best gives Pomona's juice
To match the sprightly genius of Champain. 135
Thrice happy days ! in rural business past ;
Blest winter nights ! when, as the genial fire
Cheers the wide hall, his cordial family
With soft domestic arts the hours beguile,
And pleasing talk that starts no timorous fame,
With witless wantonness to hunt it down : 141
Or through the fairy-land of tale or song
Delighted wander, in fictitious fates
Engag'd, and all that strikes humanity :
Till lost in fable, they the stealing hour 145
Of timely rest forget. Sometimes, at eve,

PRESERVING HEALTH. 49

His neighbours lift the latch, and bless unbid
 His festal roof; while, o'er the light repast,
 And sprightly cups, they mix in social joy;
 And, thro' the maze of conversation, trace 150
 Whate'er amuses or improves the mind.
 Sometimes at eve (for I delight to taste
 The native zest and flavour of the fruit,
 Where sense grows wild and takes of no manure)
 The decent, honest, chearful husbandman 155
 Should drown his labour in my friendly bowl;
 And at my table find himself at home.

Whate'er you study, in whatever you sweat,
 Indulge your taste. Some love the manly foils;
 The tennis some; and some the graceful dance.
 Others, more hardy, range the purple heath, 161
 Or naked stubble; where from field to field
 The sounding coveys urge their labouring flight;
 Eager amid the rising cloud to pour
 The gun's unerring thunder: and there are 165
 Whom still the meed * of the green archer charms
 He chuses best, whose labour entertains
 His vacant fancy most: the toil you hate
 Fatigues you soon, and scarce improves your limbs.

* This word is much used by some of the old English
 poets, and signifies *reward* or *prize*.

As beauty still has blemish ; and the mind 170
The most accomplish'd its imperfect side ;
Few bodies are there of that happy mould
But some one part is weaker than the rest :
The legs, perhaps, or arms refuse their load,
Or the chest labours. These assiduously, 175
But gently, in their proper arts employ'd,
Acquire a vigour and elastic spring
To which they were not born. But weaker parts
Abhor fatigue and violent discipline.

Begin with gentle toils ; and, as your nerves 180
Grow firm, to hardier by just steps aspire.
The prudent, even in every moderate walk,
At first but saunter ; and by slow degrees
Increase their pace. This doctrine of the wise
Well knows the master of the flying steed. 185
First from the goal the manag'd coursers play
On bended reins ; as yet the skillful youth
Repress their foamy pride ; but every breath
The race grows warmer, and the tempest swells ;
Till all the fiery mettle has its way, 190
And the thick thunder hurries o'er the plain.
When all at once from indolence to toil
You spring, the fibres by the hasty shock
Are tir'd and crack'd, before their unctuous coats,
Compress'd, can pour the lubricating balm. 195
Besides, collected in the passive veins,

PRESERVING HEALTH. 51

The purple mafs a sudden torrent rolls,
O'erpowers the heart, and deluges the lungs
With dangerous inundation : oft the fource
Of fatal woes ; a cough that foams with blood,
Asthma, and feller * Peripneumony, 201
Or the flow minings of the hectic fire.

Th' athletic Fool, to whom what heav'n deny'd
Of soul is well compensated in limbs,
Oft from his rage, or brainless frolic, feels 105
His vegetation and brute force decay.
The men of better clay and finer mould
Know nature, feel the human dignity ;
And scorn to vie with oxen or with apes.
Pursu'd prolixly, even the gentlest toil 210
Is waste of health : repose by small fatigue
Is earn'd ; and (where your habit is not prone
To thaw) by the first moisture of the brows.
The fine and subtle spirits cost too much
To be profus'd, too much the roscid balm. 215
But when the hard varieties of life
You toil to learn ; or try the dusky chase,
Or the warm deeds of some important day :
Hot from the field, indulge not yet your limbs
In wish'd repose ; nor court the fanning gale, 220
Nor court the spring. O ! by the sacred tears

† The inflammation of the lungs.

Of widows, orphans, mothers, sisters, fires,
 Forbear ! No other pestilence has driven
 Such myriads o'er th' irremeable deep.

Why this so fatal, the sagacious Muse 225

Thro' nature's cunning labyrinths could trace :

But there are secrets which who knows not now,
 Must, ere he reach them, climb the heapy Alps
 Of science ; and devote seven years to toil.

Besides, I would not stun your patient ears 230
 With what it little boots you to attain.

He knows enough, the mariner, who knows [boil,
 Where lurk the shelves, and where the whirlpools

What signs portend the storm : to subtler minds
 He leaves to scan, from what mysterious cause 235

Charybdis rages in th' Ionian wave ;

Whence neither oar nor sail can stem ; and why
 The roughening deep expects the storm, as sure
 As red Orion mounts the shrouded heaven. 240

In antient times, when Rome with Athens vied
 For polish'd luxury and useful arts ;

All hot and reeking from the Olympic strife,

And warm Palestra, in the tepid bath

Th' athletic youth relax'd their weary'd limbs. 245

Soft oils bedew'd them, with the grateful pow'rs
 Of Nard and Cassia fraught, to sooth and heal

The cherish'd nerves. Our less voluptuous clime
 Not much invites us to such arts as these.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 53

'Tis not for those, whom gelid skies embrace, 250
 And chilling fogs; whose perspiration feels
 Such frequent bars from Eurys and the North;
 'Tis not for those to cultivate a skin
 Too soft; or teach the recremental fume
 Too fast to crowd through such precarious ways.
 For thro' the small arterial mouths, that pierce 256
 In endless millions the close-woven skin,
 The baser fluids in a constant stream
 Escape, and viewless melt into the winds.
 While this eternal, this most copious, waste 260
 Of blood, degenerate into vapid brine,
 Maintains its wonted measure, all the powers
 Of health befriend you, all the wheels of life
 With ease and pleasure move: but this restrain'd
 Or more or less, so more or less you feel 265
 The functions labour: from this fatal source
 What woes descend is never to be sung.
 To take their numbers were to count the sands
 That ride in whirlwind the parch'd Libyan air;
 Or waves that, when the blustering North embroils
 The Baltic, thunder on the German shore. 271
 Subject not then by soft emollient arts
 This grand expence, on which your fates depend,
 To every caprice of the sky; nor thwart
 The genius of your clime: for from the blood 275
 Least fickle rise the recremental steams,
 And least obnoxious to the styptic air,

Which breathe thro' straiter and more callous pores.
 The temper'd Scythian hence, half-naked treads
 His boundless snows, nor rues th' inclement heaven;
 And hence our painted ancestors defied 281
 The East: nor curs'd, like us, their fickle sky.

The body, moulded by the clime, endures
 Th' Equator heats or Hyperborean frost: 285
 Except, by habits foreign to its turn,
 Unwise you counteract its forming pow'r.
 Rude at the first, the winter shocks you less
 By long acquaintance: study then your sky,
 Form to its manners your obsequious frame,
 And learn to suffer what it cannot shun. 290
 Against the rigors of a damp cold heav'n
 To fortify their bodies, some frequent
 The gelid cistern; and, where nought forbids,
 I praise their dauntless heart: A frame so steel'd
 Dreads not the cough, nor those ungethial blasts
 That breathe the Tertian or fell Rheumatism;
 The nerves so temper'd never quit their tone,
 No chronic languors haunt such hardy breasts.
 But all things have their bounds: and he who makes
 By daily use the kindest regimen 300
 Essential to his health, should never mix
 With human kind, nor art nor trade pursue.
 He not the safe vicissitude of life
 Without some shock endures; ill-fitted he

PRESERVING HEALTH. 93

To want the known, or bear unusual things. 305
 Besides, the powerful remedies of pain
 (Since pain in spite of all our care will come)
 Should never with your prosperous days of health
 Grow too familiar : for by frequent use
 The strongest medicines lose their healing power,
 And even the surest poisons theirs to kill. 311

Let those who from the frozen Arctos reach
 Parch'd Mauritania, or the sultry West,
 Or the wide flood through rich Indostan roll'd,
 Plunge thrice a day, and in the tepid wave 315
 Untwist their stubborn pores ; that full and free
 Th' evaporation through the soften'd skin
 May bear proportion to the swelling blood.
 So shall they 'scape the fever's rapid flames ;
 So feel untainted the hot breath of hell, 320
 With us, the man of no complaint demands.
 The warm ablution just enough to clear
 The sluices of the skin, enough to keep
 The body sacred from indecent soil.
 Still to be pure, ev'n did it not conduce 325
 (As much it does) to health, were greatly worth
 Your daily pains. 'Tis this adorns the rich ;
 The want of this is Poverty's worst woe ;
 With this external virtue age maintains
 A decent grace ; without it youth and charms 330
 Are loathsome. This the venal Graces know ;

So doubtless do your wives : for married fires,
 As well as lovers, still pretend to taste ;
 Nor is it less (all prudent wives can tell)
 To lose a husband's than a lover's heart. 335

But now the hours and seasons when to toil
 From foreign themes recall my wandering song.
 Some labour fasting, or but slightly fed,
 To lull the grinding stomach's hungry rage.
 Where nature feeds too corpulent a frame, 340
 'Tis wisely done : for while the thirsty veins,
 Impatient of lean penury, devour
 The treasure'd oil, then is the happiest time
 To shake the lazy balsam from its cells.
 Now while the stomach from the full repast 345
 Subsides, but ere returning hunger gnaws,
 Ye leaner habits, give an hour to toil :
 And ye whom no luxuriancy of growth
 Oppresses yet, or threatens to oppress,
 But from the recent meal no labours please, 350
 Of limbs or mind. For now the cordial powers
 Claim all the wandering spirits to a work
 Of strong and subtle toil, and great event :
 A work of time : and you may rue the day
 You hurried, with untimely exercise, 355
 A half-concocted chyle into the blood,
 The body overcharg'd with unctuous phlegm
 Much toil demands : the lean elastic less,

While winter chills the blood, and binds the veins,
 No labours are too hard : by those you 'scape 360
 The slow diseases of the torpid year ;
 Endless to name ; to one of which alone,
 To that which tears the nerves, the toil of slaves
 Is pleasure : Oh ! from such inhuman pains
 May all be free who merit not the wheel : 365
 But from the burning Lion when the sun
 Pours down his sultry wrath ; now while the blood
 Too much already maddens in the veins,
 And all the finer fluids through the skin
 Explore their flight ; me, near the cool cascade 370
 Reclin'd, or fauntring in the lofty grove,
 No needless slight occasion should engage
 To pant and sweat beneath the fiery noon.
 Now the fresh morn alone and mellow eve
 To shady walks and active rural sports 375
 Invite, But, while the chilling dews descend,
 May nothing tempt you to the cold embrace
 Of humid skies ; though 'tis no vulgar joy
 To trace the horrors of the solemn wood
 While the soft evening saddens into night : 380
 Though the sweet Poet of the vernal groves
 Melts all the night in strains of am'rous woe.

The shades descend, and midnight o'er the world
 Expands her sable wings. Great Nature droops
 Through all her works. Now happy he whose toil

Has o'er his languid powerless limbs diffus'd 386
 A pleasing lassitude : he not in vain
 Invokes the gentle Deity of dreams.
 His powers the most voluptuously dissolve
 In soft repose : on him the balmy dews 390
 Of sleep with double nutriment descend.
 But would you sweetly waste the blank of night
 In deep oblivion ; or on Fancy's wings
 Visit the paradise of happy Dreams,
 And waken chearful as the lively morn ; 395
 Oppress not Nature sinking down to rest
 With feasts too late, too solid, or too full :
 But be the first concoction half-matur'd
 Ere you to mighty indolence resign
 Your passive faculties. He from the toils 400
 And troubles of the day to heavier toil
 Retires, whom trembling from the tower that rocks
 Amid the clouds, or Calpe's hideous height,
 The busy demons hurl ; or in the main
 O'erwhelm ; or busy struggling under ground.
 Not all a monarch's luxury the woes 406
 Can counterpoise of that most wretched man,
 Whose nights are shaken with the frantic fits
 Of wild Orestes ; whose delirious brain,
 Stung by the Furies, works with poison'd thought :
 While pale and monstrous painting shocks the soul ;
 And mangled consciousness bemoans itself 412
 For ever torn ; and chaos floating round !

PRESERVING HEALTH. 39

What dreams presage, what dangers these or those
Portend to sanity, though prudent fears 415
Reveal'd of old, and men of deathless fame,
We would not to the superstitious mind
Suggest new throbs, new vanities of fear.

'Tis burs to teach you from the peaceful night
To banish omens and all restless woes. 420

In study some protract the silent hours,
Which others consecrate to mirth and wine;
And sleep till noon, and hardly live till night.
But surely this redeems not from the shades
One hour of life. Nor does it nought avail 425
What season you to drowsy Morpheus give
Of th' ever-varying circle of the day;
Or whether, through the tedious winter gloom,
You tempt the midnight or the morning damps.
The body, fresh and vigorous from repose, 430
Defies the early fogs: but, by the toils
Of wakeful day, exhausted and unstrung,
Weakly resists the night's unwholesome breath.
The grand discharge, th' effusion of the skin,
Slowly impair'd, the languid maladies 435
Creep on, and through the sinking functions steal.
So, when the chilling East invades the spring,
The delicate Narcissus pines away
In hectic languor; and a slow disease
Taints all the family of flowers, condemn'd 440

To cruel heav'ns. But why already prone
 To fade, should beauty cherish its own bane?
 O shame! O pity! nipt with pale quadrille,
 And midnight cares, the bloom of Albion dies!

By toil subdu'd, the warrior and the hind 445
 Sleep fast and deep: their active functions soon
 With generous streams the subtle tubes supply;
 And soon the tonic irritable nerves
 Feel the fresh impulse, and awake the soul.
 The sons of indolence, with long repose, 450
 Grow torpid; and with slowest Lethe drunk,
 Feebly and lingringly return to life,
 Blunt every sense and pow'rless every limb.
 Ye prone to sleep (whom sleeping most annoys)
 On the hard matrafs or elastic couch 455
 Extend your limbs, and wean yourselves from sloth;
 Nor grudge the lean projector, of dry brain
 And springy nerves, the blandishments of down:
 Nor envy while the buried bacchanal
 Exhales his surfeit in prolixer dreams. 460

He without riot, in the balmy feast
 Of life, the wants of nature has supply'd
 Who rises cool, serene, and full of soul.
 But pliant nature more or less demands,
 As custom forms her; and all sudden change 465
 She hates of habit, even from bad to good.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 61

If faults in life, or new emergencies,
 From habits urge you by long time confin'd,
 Slow may the change arrive, and stage by stage;
 Slow as the shadow o'er the dial moves, 470
 Slow as the stealing progress of the year.

Observe the circling year. How unperceiv'd
 Her seasons change! Behold! by slow degrees,
 Stern Winter tam'd into a ruder Spring;
 The ripen'd Spring a milder Summer glows; 475
 Departing Summer sheds Pomona's store;
 And aged Autumn brews the winter-storm.
 Slow as they come, these changes come not void
 Of mortal shocks: the cold and torrid reigns,
 The two great periods of th' important year, 480
 Are in their first approaches seldom safe:
 Funereal Autumn all the sickly dread,
 And the black fates deform the lovely Spring.
 He well-advis'd who taught our wiser fires
 Early to borrow Muscovy's warm spoils, 485
 Ere the first frost has touch'd the tender blade;
 And late resign them, though the wanton Spring
 Should deck her charms with all her sister's rays.
 For while the effluence of the skin maintains
 Its native measure, the pleuritic Spring 490
 Glides harmless by; and Autumn, sick to death
 With fallow Quartans, no contagion breathes.

H

I in prophetic numbers could unfold
 The omens of the year : what seasons teem
 With what diseases ; what the humid South 495
 Prepares, and what the Dæmon of the East :
 But you perhaps refuse the tedious song.
 Besides, whatever plagues in heat, or cold,
 Or drought, or moisture dwell, they hurt not you,
 Skill'd to correct the vices of the sky, 500
 And taught already how to each extreme
 To bend your life. But should the public bane
 Infect you ; or some trespass of your own,
 Or flaw of nature, hint mortality :
 Soon as a not unpleasing horror glides 505
 Along the spine, thro' all your torpid limbs ;
 When first the head throbs, or the stomach feels
 A sickly load, a weary pain the loins ;
 Be Celfus call'd : the Fates come rushing on ;
 The rapid Fates admit of no delay. 510
 While wilful you, and fatally secure,
 Expect to-morrow's more auspicious fun,
 The growing pest, whose infancy was weak
 And easy vanquish'd, with triumphant sway
 O'erpow'rs your life. For want of timely care,
 Millions have died of medicable wounds. 516

Ah ! in what perils is vain life engag'd !
 What flight neglects, what trivial faults destroy
 The hardiest frame ! of indolence, of toil,

PRESERVING HEALTH. 63

We die ; of want, of superfluity : 520
 The all-surrounding heaven, the vital air,
 Is big with death. And though the putrid South
 Be shut ; though no convulsive agony
 Shake, from the deep foundations of the world,
 Th' imprisoned plagues ; a secret venom oft 525
 Corrupts the air, the water, and the land.
 What living deaths has sad Byzantium seen !
 How oft has Cairo, with a mother's woe,
 Wept o'er her slaughter'd sons and lonely streets !
 Even Albion, girt with less malignant skies, 530
 Albion the poison of the Gods has drank,
 And felt the sting of monsters all her own.

Ere yet the fell Plantagenets had spent
 Their antient rage, at Bosworth's purple field ;
 While, for which tyrant England should receive,
 Her legions in incestuous murders mix'd, 536
 And daily horrors ; till the Fates were drunk
 With kindred blood by kindred hands profus'd :
 Another plague of more gigantic arm
 Arose, a monster never known before, 540
 Rear'd from Cocytus its portentous head.
 This rapid Fury, not like other pests,
 Pursu'd a gradual course, but in a day
 Rush'd as a storm o'er half th' astonish'd isle,
 And strew'd with sudden carcases the land. 545

First through the shoulders, or whatever part
 Was seiz'd the first, a fervid vapour sprung.
 With rash combustion thence, the quivering spark
 Shot to the heart, and kindled all within :
 And soon the surface caught the spreading fires.
 Thro' all the yielding pores the melted blood 551
 Gush'd out in smoaky sweats ; but nought assuag'd
 The torrid heat within, nor aught reliev'd
 The stomach's anguish. With incessant toil
 Desperate of ease, impatient of their pain, 555
 They toss'd from side to side. In vain the stream
 Ran full and clear, they burnt and thirsted still.
 The restless arteries with rapid blood
 Beat strong and frequent. Thick and pantingly
 The breath was fetch'd, and with huge lab'rings
 heav'd, 560

At last a heavy pain oppress'd the head,
 A wild delirium came ; their weeping friends
 Were strangers now, and this no home of theirs,
 Harass'd with toil on toil, the sinking powers
 Lay prostrate and o'erthrown ; a ponderous sleep
 Wrap all the senses up : they slept and died. 566

In some a gentle horror crept at first
 O'er all the limbs ; the sluices of the skin
 Withheld their moisture, till by art provok'd
 The sweats o'erflow'd ; but in a clammy tide : 570
 Now free and copious, now restrain'd and slow ;

PRESERVING HEALTH. 65

Of tinctures various, as the temperature
 Had mix'd the blood ; and rank with fetid steams :
 As if the pent-up humours by delay
 Were grown more fell, more putrid, and malign.
 Here lay their hopes (tho' little hope remain'd) 576
 With full effusion of perpetual sweats
 To drive the venom out. And here the fates
 Were kind, that long they linger'd not in pain.
 For who surviv'd the sun's diurnal race 580
 Rose from the dreary gates of hell redeem'd :
 Some the sixth hour oppress'd, and some the third.

Of many thousands few untainted 'scap'd ;
 Of those infected fewer 'scap'd alive ;
 Of those who liv'd some felt a second blow ; 585
 And whom the second spar'd a third destroy'd.
 Frantic with fear, they sought by flight to shun
 The fierce contagion. O'er the mournful land
 Th' infected-city pour'd her hurrying swarms :
 Rous'd by the flames that fir'd her seats around,
 Th' infected country rush'd into the town. 591
 Some, sad at home, and in the desert some,
 Abjur'd the fatal commerce of mankind ;
 In vain : where'er they fled, the Fates pursu'd.
 Others, with hopes more specious, cross'd the main,
 To seek protection in far-distant skies ; 596
 But none they found. It seem'd the general air,
 From pole to pole, from Atlas to the East,

Was then at enmity with English blood.
 For, but the race of England, all were safe,
 In foreign climes ; nor did this fury taste 600
 The foreign blood which England then contain'd.
 Where should they fly ? The circumambient heaven
 Involv'd them still ; and every breeze was bane.
 Where find relief ? The salutary art
 Was mute ; and, startled at the new disease, 605
 In fearful whispers hopeless omens gave. [pray'rs ;
 To Heaven with suppliant rites they sent their
 Heav'n heard them not. Of every hope depriv'd ;
 Fatigu'd with vain resources ; and subdued
 With woes resistless and enfeebling fear ; 610
 Passive they sunk beneath the weighty blow.
 Nothing but lamentable sounds was heard,
 Nor aught was seen but ghastly views of death.
 Infectious horror ran from face to face,
 And pale despair. 'Tis all the business then 615
 To tend the sick, and in their turns to die.
 In heaps they fell : and oft one bed, they say,
 The sick'ning, dying, and the dead contain'd.

Ye guardian Gods, on whom the fates depend
 Of tottering Albion ! ye eternal Fires 620
 That lead through heav'n the wandering year ! ye
 That o'er th' incircling elements preside ! [Powers
 May nothing worse than what this age has seen
 Arrive ! Enough abroad, enough at home

PRESERVING HEALTH. 67

Has Albion bled. Here a distemper'd heaven 625
Has thin'd her cities ; from those lofty cliffs
That awe proud Gaul, to Thule's wintry reign ;
While in the West *, beyond th' Atlantic foam,
Her bravest sons, keen for the fight, have dy'd
The death of cowards and of common men : 630
Sunk void of wounds, and fall'n without renown.

But from these views the weeping Muses turn,
And other themes invite my wandering song.

* This was written not long after the memorable mortality happened amongst the British sailors under admiral Ho-fier, in the West-Indies.

T H E
A R T
O F P R E S E R V I N G
H E A L T H.
B O O K I V.

T H E P A S S I O N S.

T H E choice of Aliment, the choice of Air,
 The use of Toil and all external things,
 Already sung ; it now remains to trace
 What good, what evil from ourselves proceeds :
 And how the subtle Principle within 5
 Inspires with health, or mines with strange decay
 The passive body. Ye poetic Shades,
 That know the secrets of the world unseen,
 Assist my song ! For, in a doubtful theme
 Engag'd, I wander thro' mysterious ways. 10

There is, they say, (and I believe there is)
A spark within us of th' immortal fire,
That animates and moulds the grosser frame;
And, when the body sinks, escapes to heaven,
Its native seat, and mixes with the Gods. 15
Mean while this heavenly particle pervades
The mortal elements; in every nerve
It thrills with pleasure, or grows mad with pain.
And, in its secret conclave, as it feels
The body's woes and joys, this ruling power 20
Weilds at its will the dull material world,
And is the body's health or malady.

By its own toil the gross corporeal frame
Fatigues, extenuates, or destroys itself.
Nor less the labours of the mind corrode 25
The solid fabric: for by subtle parts,
And viewless atoms, secret Nature moves
The mighty wheels of this stupendous world.
By subtle fluids pour'd thro' subtle tubes
The natural, vital, functions are perform'd. 30
By these the stubborn aliments are tam'd;
The toiling heart distributes life and strength;
These the still-crumbling frame rebuild; and these
Are lost in thinking, and dissolve in air.

But 'tis not Thought (for still the soul's employ'd)
'Tis painful thinking that corrodes our clay. 36

All day the vacant eye without fatigue
 Strays o'er the heaven and earth; but long intent
 On microscopic arts its vigour fails.

Just so the mind, with various thought amus'd, 40
 Nor akes itself, nor gives the body pain.

But anxious Study, Discontent, and Care,
 Love without hope, and Hate without revenge,
 And Fear, and Jealousy, fatigue the soul,
 Engross the subtle ministers of life, 45

And spoil the lab'ring functions of their share.

Hence the lean gloom that Melancholy wears;

The Lover's paleness; and the fallow hue

Of Envy, Jealousy; the meagre stare

Of sore Revenge: the canker'd body hence 50

Betrays each fretful motion of the mind.

[day

The strong-built pedant; who both night and
 Feeds on the coarsest fare the schools bestow,

And crudely fattens at gross Burman's stall;

O'erwhelm'd with phlegm lies in a dropsy drown'd,

Or sinks in lethargy before his time. 56

With useful studies you, and arts that please

Employ your mind, amuse but not fatigue.

Peace to each drowsy metaphysic sage! 60

And ever may all heavy systems rest!

Yet some there are, even of elastic parts,

Whom strong and obstinate ambition leads

Through all the rugged roads of barren lore,

PRESERVING HEALTH. 71

And gives to relish what their generous taste
 Would else refuse. But may nor thirst of fame, 65
 Nor love of knowlege, urge you to fatigue
 With constant drudgery the liberal soul.
 Toy with your books : and as the various fits
 Of humour seize you, from Philosophy
 To Fable shift ; from serious Antonine 70
 To Rabelais' ravings, and from prose to song.

While reading pleases, but no longer, read ;
 And read aloud resounding Homer's strain,
 And weild the thunder of Demosthenes.
 The chest so exercis'd improves its strength ; 75
 And quick vibrations through the bowels drive
 The restless blood, which in unactive days
 Would loiter else through unelastic tubes.
 Deem it not trifling while I recommend
 What posture suits : to stand and sit by turns, 80
 As nature prompts, is best. But o'er your leaves
 To lean for ever, cramps the vital parts,
 And robs the fine machinery of its play.

'Tis the great art of life to manage well
 The restless mind. For ever on pursuit 85
 Of knowlege bent, it starves the grosser powers,
 Quite unemploy'd, against its own repose
 It turns its fatal edge, and sharper pangs
 Than what the body knows embitter life.

Chiefly where Solitude, sad nurse of Care, 90
To sickly musing gives the pensive mind.
There Madness enters ; and the dim-ey'd Fiend,
Sour Melancholy, night and day provokes
Her own eternal wound. The sun grows pale ;
A mournful visionary light o'erspreads 95
The chearful face of nature : earth becomes
A dreary desert, and heaven frowns above.
Then various shapes of curs'd illusion rise :
Whate'er the wretched fears, creating Fear
Forms out of nothing ; and with monsters teems
Unknown in hell. The prostrate soul beneath 101
A load of huge imagination heaves ;
And all the horrors that the guilty feel
With anxious flutterings wake the guiltless breast.

Such phantoms Pride in solitary scenes, 105
Or Fear, on delicate Self-love creates.
From other cares absolv'd, the busy mind
Finds in yourself a theme to pore upon ;
It finds you miserable, or makes you so.
For while yourself you anxiously explore, 110
Timorous Self-love, with sicking Fancy's aid,
Presents the danger that you dread the most,
And ever galls you in your tender part.
Hence some for love, and some for jealousy,
For grim religion some, some for pride, 115
Have lost their reason : some for fear of want

PRESERVING HEALTH. 73

Want all their lives ; and others every day.
 For fear of dying suffer worse than death.
 Ah ! from your bosoms banish, if you can,
 Those fatal guests : and first the Demon Fear; 120
 That trembles at impossible events,
 Lest aged Atlas should resign his load,
 And heaven's eternal battlements rush down.
 Is there an evil worse than Fear itself ?
 And what avails it, that indulgent heaven 125
 From mortal eyes has wrapt the woes to come,
 If we, ingenious to torment ourselves,
 Grow pale at hideous fictions of our own ?
 Enjoy the present ; nor with needless cares,
 Of what may spring from blind misfortune's womb,
 Appal the surest hour that life bestows. 131
 Serene, and master of yourself, prepare
 For what may come ; and leave the rest to Heaven.

Oft from the Body, by long ails mistun'd,
 These evils sprung the most important health, 135
 That of the mind, destroy : and when the mind
 They first invade, the conscious body soon
 In sympathetic languishment declines.
 These chronic Passions, while from real woes
 They rise, and yet without the body's fault 140
 Infest the soul, admit one only cure ;
 Diversion, hurry, and a restless life.
 Vain are the consolations of the wise ;

In vain your friends would reason down your pain.
 O ye, whose souls relentless love has tam'd 145
 To soft distress, or friends untimely slain !
 Court not the luxury of tender thought ;
 Nor deem it impious to forget those pains
 That hurt the living, nought avail the dead.
 Go, soft enthusiast ! quit the cypress groves, 150
 Nor to the rivulet's lonely moanings tune
 Your sad complaint. Go, seek the chearful haunts
 Of men, and mingle with the bustling croud ;
 Lay schemes for wealth, or power, or fame, the wish
 Of nobler minds, and push them night and day.
 Or join the caravan in quest of scenes 556
 New to your eyes, and shifting every hour,
 Beyond the Alps, beyond the Apennines.
 Or more advent'rous, rush into the field
 Where war grows hot ; and raging thro' the sky,
 The lofty trumpet swells the madd'ning soul :
 And in the hardy camp and toilsome march
 Forget all softer and less manly cares.

But most too passive, when the blood runs low,
 Too weakly indolent to strive with pain, 165
 And bravely by resisting conquer Fate,
 Try Circe's arts ; and in the tempting bowl
 Of poison'd Nectar sweet oblivion drink.
 Struck by the pow'ful charm, the gloom dissolves
 In empty air ; Elysium opens round. 170

PRESERVING HEALTH. 75

A pleasing phrenzy buoys the lighten'd soul,
 And sanguine hopes dispel your fleeting care ;
 And what was difficult, and what was dire,
 Yields to your prowess and superior stars :
 The happiest you of all that e'er were mad, 175
 Or are, or shall be, could this folly last.
 But soon your heaven is gone ; a heavier gloom
 Shuts o'er your head: and, as the thund'ring stream,
 Swoln o'er its banks with sudden mountain rain,
 Sinks from its tumult to a silent brook ; 180
 So, when the frantic raptures in your breast
 Subside, you languish into mortal man ;
 You sleep, and waking find yourself undone.
 For prodigal of life in one rash night
 You lavish'd more than might support three days.
 A heavy morning comes ; your cares return
 With tenfold rage. An anxious stomach well
 May be endur'd ; so may the throbbing head :
 But such a dim delirium, such a dream,
 Involves you ; such a dastardly despair 190
 Unmans your soul, as madd'ning Pentheus felt,
 When, baited round Cithæron's cruel sides,
 He saw two suns, and double Thebes ascend.
 You curse the sluggish Port ; you curse the wretch,
 The felon, with unnatural mixture first 195
 Who dar'd to violate the virgin Wine.
 Or on the fugitive Champain you pour
 A thousand curses ; for to heav'n it rapt

Your soul, to plunge you deeper in despair.
 Perhaps you rue even that divinest gift, 200
 The gay, serene, good-natur'd Burgundy,
 Or the fresh fragrant vintage of the Rhine :
 And wish that heaven from mortals had with-held
 The grape, and all intoxicating bowls.

Besides, it wounds you sore to recollect 205
 What follies in your loose unguarded hour
 Escap'd. For one irrevocable word,
 Perhaps that meant no harm, you lose a friend.
 Or in a rage of wine your hasty hand
 Performs a deed to haunt you to your grave. 210
 Add that your means, your health, your parts decay;
 Your friends avoid you ; or if one remains
 To wish you well, he wishes you in heaven.
 Despis'd, unwept you fall ; who might have left
 A sacred, cherish'd, sadly-pleasing name ; 216
 A name still to be utter'd with a sigh.
 Your last ungraceful scene has quite effac'd
 All sense and memory of your former worth.

How to live happiest ; how avoid the pains, 220
 The disappointments, and disgusts of those
 Who would' in pleasure all their hours employ ;
 The precepts here of a divine old man
 I could recite. Though old, he still retain'd
 His manly sense, and energy of mind. 225

PRESERVING HEALTH. 77

Virtuous and wise he was, but not severe ;
 He still remember'd that he once was young ;
 His easy presence check'd no decent joy.
 Him even the dissolute admir'd ; for he
 A graceful looseness when he pleas'd put on, 230
 And laughing could instruct. Much had he read,
 Much more had seen ; he studied from the life,
 And in th' original perus'd mankind.

Vers'd in the woes and vanities of life,
 He pitied Man : and much he pitied those 235
 Whom falsely-smiling Fate has curs'd with means
 To dissipate their days in quest of joy.
 Our aim is happiness ; 'tis yours, 'tis mine,
 He said, 'tis the pursuit of all that live ;
 Yet few attain it, if 'twas e'er attain'd. 240
 But they the widest wander from the mark,
 Who through the flow'ry paths of fauntring Joy
 Seek this coy Goddess ; that from stage to stage
 Invites us still, but shifts as we pursue.
 For, not to name the pains that pleasure brings 245
 To counterpoise itself, relentless Fate
 Forbids that we through gay voluptuous wilds,
 Should ever roam ; and were the fates more kind,
 Our narrow luxuries would soon be stale.
 Were these exhaustless, Nature would grow sick,
 And, cloy'd with pleasure, squeamishly complain
 That all was vanity, and life a dream. 252

Let nature rest : be busy for yourself,
 And for your friend ; be busy even in vain
 Rather than teize her fated appetites, 255
 Who never fasts, no banquet e'er enjoys ;
 Who never toils or watches, never sleeps.
 Let nature rest : and when the taste of joy
 Grows keen, indulge ; but shun satiety.

'Tis not for mortals always to be blest. 260
 But him the least the dull or painful hours
 Of life oppress, whom sober Sense conducts,
 And Virtue, through this labyrinth we tread.
 Virtue and Sense I mean not to disjoin ;
 Virtue and Sense are one : and, trust me, still 265
 A faithless Heart betrays the Head unsound.
 Virtue (for mere Good-nature is a fool)
 Is sense and spirit, with humanity :
 'Tis sometimes angry, and its frown confounds ;
 'Tis even vindictive, but in vengeance just. 270
 Knaves fain would laugh at it ; some great ones
 But at his heart the most undaunted son [dare ;
 Of fortune dreads its name and awful charms.
 To noblest uses this determines wealth ;
 This is the solid pomp of prosperous days ; 275
 The peace and shelter of adversity.
 And if you pant for glory, build your fame
 On this foundation, which the secret shock
 Defies of Envy and all-sapping Time.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 79

The gawdy gloss of Fortune only strikes 280
 The vulgar eye : the suffrage of the wise,
 The praise that's worth ambition, is attain'd
 By Sense alone, and dignity of mind.

Virtue, the strength and beauty of the soul,
 Is the best gift of heaven : a happiness 285
 That even above the smiles and frowns of fate
 Exalts great Nature's favourites : a wealth
 That ne'er incumbers, nor to baser hands
 Can be transfer'd : it is the only good
 Man justly boasts of, or can call his own. 290
 Riches are oft by guilt and baseness earn'd ;
 Or dealt by chance, to shield a lucky knave,
 Or throw a cruel sun-shine on a fool.
 But for one end, one much-neglected use,
 Are riches worth your care : (for Nature's wants
 Are few, and without opulence supply'd.) 296
 This noble end is to produce the Soul ;
 To shew the virtues in their fairest light ;
 To make Humanity the Minister
 Of bounteous Providence ; and teach the breast
 That generous luxury the Gods enjoy. 101

Thus, in his graver vein, the friendly Sage
 Sometimes declaim'd. Of Right and Wrong he
 Truth as refin'd as ever Athens heard ; [taught
 And (strange to tell !) he practis'd what he preach'd.

Skill'd in the Passions, how to check their sway
 He knew, as far as Reason can controul 307
 The lawless Pow'rs. But other cares are mine :
 Form'd in the school of Pæon, I relate
 What Passions hurt the body, what improve : 310
 Avoid them, or invite them, as you may.

Know then, whatever chearful and serene
 Supports the mind, supports the body too.
 Hence the most vital movement mortals feel
 Is Hope ; the balm and life-blood of the soul. 315
 It pleases, and it lasts. Indulgent heaven
 Sent down the kind delusion, through the paths
 Of rugged life to lead us patient on ;
 And make our happiest state no tedious thing.
 Our greatest good, and what we least can spare,
 Is hope ; the last of all our evils, fear. 321

But there are Passions grateful to the breast,
 And yet no friends to Life : perhaps they please
 Or to excess, and dissipate the soul ;
 Or while they please, torment. The stubborn Clown,
 The ill-tam'd Russian, and pale Usurer, 326
 (If Love's omnipotence such hearts can mould)
 May safely mellow into love ; and grow
 Refin'd, humane, and generous, if they can.
 Love in such bosoms never to a fault 330
 Or pains or pleases. But, ye finer Souls,

PRESERVING HEALTH. 81

Form'd to soft luxury, and prompt to thrill
 With all the tumults, all the joys and pains,
 That beauty gives ; with caution and reserve
 Indulge the sweet destroyer of repose, 335
 Nor court too much the Queen of charming cares.
 For, while the cherish'd poison in your breast
 Ferments and maddens ; sick with jealousy,
 Absence, distrust, or even with anxious joy,
 The wholesome appetites and powers of life 340
 Dissolve in languor. The coy stomach loaths
 The genial board : your chearful days are gone ;
 The generous bloom that flush'd your cheeks is fled.
 To sighs devoted and to tender pains,
 Pensive you sit, or solitary stray. 345
 And waste your youth in musing. Musing first
 Toy'd into care your unsuspected heart :
 It found a liking there, a sportful fire,
 And that fomented into serious love ;
 Which musing daily strengthens and improves 350
 Through all the heights of fondness and romance :
 And you're undone, the fatal shaft has sped,
 If once you doubt whether you love or no.
 The body wastes away ; th' infected mind,
 Dissolv'd in female tenderness, forgets 355
 Each manly virtue, and grows dead to fame.
 Sweet heaven from such intoxicating charms
 Defend all worthy breasts ! Not that I deem
 Love always dangerous, always to be shun'd.

Love well repaid, and not too weakly funk 360
 In wanton and unmanly tendernefs,
 Adds bloom to Health ; o'er ev'ry virtue sheds
 A gay, humane, and amiable grace,
 And brightens all the ornaments of man.
 But fruitless, hopeless, difappointed, rack'd 365
 With jealousy, fatigu'd with hope and fear,
 Too serious, or too languishingly fond,
 Unnerves the body and unmans the soul.
 And some have died for Love ; and some run mad ;
 And some with desperate hand themselves have
 slain, 370

Some to extinguish, others to prevent,
 A mad devotion to one dangerous Fair,
 Court all they meet ; in hopes to dissipate
 The cares of Love amongst an hundred Brides.
 Th' event is doubtful : for there are who find 375
 A cure in this ; there are who find it not.
 'Tis no relief ; alas ! it rather galls
 The wound, to those who are sincerely sick.
 For while from feverish and tumultuous joys
 The nerves grow languid and the soul subsides,
 The tender fancy smarts with every sting, 381
 And what was love before is madness now.
 Is health your care, or luxury your aim,
 Be temperate still ; when nature bids, obey ;
 Her wild impatient fallies bear no curb : 385

But when the prurient habit of delight,
 Or loose imagination, spurs you on
 To deeds above your strength, impute it not
 To Nature : Nature all compulsion hates.
 Ah ! let nor luxury nor vain renown 390
 Urge you to feats you well might sleep without ;
 To make what should be rapture a fatigue,
 A tedious task ; nor in the wanton arms
 Of twining Lais melt your manhood down.
 For from the colliquation of soft joys 395
 How chang'd you rise ! the ghost of what you was !
 Languid, and melanchoy, and gaunt, and wan ;
 Your veins exhausted, and your nerves unstrung.
 Spoil'd of its balm and sprightly zest, the blood
 Grows vapid phlegm ; along the tender nerves
 (To each slight impulse tremblingly awake) 401
 A subtle Fiend that mimics all the plagues
 Rapid and restless springs from part to part.
 The blooming honours of your youth are fallen ;
 Your vigour pines ; your vital powers decay ; 405
 Diseases haunt you ; and untimely Age
 Creeps on ; unsocial, impotent, and lewd.
 Infatuate, impious, epicure ! to waste
 The stores of pleasure, chearfulness, and health !
 Infatuate all who make delight their trade, 410
 And coy perdition every hour pursue.

Who pines with Love, or in lascivious flames

Consumes, is with his own consent undone :
 He chuses to be wretched, to be mad ;
 And warn'd proceeds and wilful to his fate. 415
 But there's a Passion, whose tempestuous sway
 Tears up each virtue planted in their breast,
 And shakes to ruins proud Philosophy.
 For pale and trembling Anger rushes in,
 With fault'ring speech, and eyes that wildly stare ;
 Fierce as the tiger, madder than the seas, 421
 Desperate, and arm'd with more than human
 strength.

How soon the calm, humane, and polish'd man
 Forgets compunction, and starts up a fiend !
 Who pines in Love, or wastes with silent Cares,
 Envy, or ignominy, or tender grief,
 Slowly descends and ling'ring to the shades.
 But he whom Anger stings, drops, if he dies,
 At once, and rushes apoplectic down ;
 Or a fierce fever hurries down to hell. 430
 For, as the Body through unnumber'd strings
 Reverberates each vibration of the Soul ;
 As is the passion, such is still the Pain
 The Body feels ; or chronic, or acute.
 And oft a sudden storm at once o'erpowers 435
 The Life, or gives your Reason to the winds,
 Such fates attend the rash alarm of Fear,
 And sudden Grief, and Rage, and sudden Joy.

PRESERVING HEALTH. 85

There are, mean time, to whom the boist'rous fit
Is Health, and only fills the sails of life. 440
For where the mind a torpid winter leads,
Wrapt in a Body corpulent and cold,
And each clogg'd function lazily moves on ;
A generous folly spurns th' incumbent load,
Unlocks the breast, and gives a cordial glow. 445
But if your wrathful blood is apt to boil,
Or are your nerves too irritably strung,
Wave all dispute ; be cautious, if you joke ;
Keep Lent for ever ; and forswear the Bowl.
For one rash moment sends you to the shades, 450
Or shatters ev'ry hopeful scheme of life,
And gives to horror all your days to come.
Fate, arm'd with thunder, fire, and ev'ry plague,
That ruins, tortures, or distracts mankind,
And makes the happy wretched in an hour, 454
O'erwhelms you not with woes so horrible
As your own Wrath, nor gives more sudden blows.

While Choler works, good friend, you may be
wrong ;
Distrust yourself, and sleep before you fight.
'Tis not too late to-morrow to be brave ; 460
If honour bids, to-morrow kill or die.
But calm advice against a raging fit
Avails too little ; and it tries the power
Of all that ever taught in Prose or Song,

To tame the Fiend that sleeps a gentle Lamb, 465
 And wakes a Lion. Unprovok'd and calm,
 You reason well, see as you ought to see,
 And wonder at the madness of mankind :
 Seiz'd with the common rage, you soon forget
 The speculation of your wiser hours. 470
 Beset with Furies of all deadly shapes,
 Fierce and insidious, violent and slow :
 With all that urge or lure us on to Fate :
 What refuge shall we seek ? what arms prepare ?
 Where Reason proves too weak, or void of wiles
 To cope with subtle or impetuous powers, 476
 I would invoke new Passions to your aid :
 With Indignation would extinguish Fear,
 With Fear or generous Pity vanquish Rage,
 And Love with Pride ; and force to force oppose.

There is a charm, a power, that sways the breast ;
 Bids every Passion revel or be still ;
 Inspires with Rage, or all your Cares dissolves ;
 Can soothe Distraction, and almost Despair.
 That power is Music : Far beyond the stretch 485
 Of those unmeaning warblers on our stage ;
 Those clumsy Heroes, those fat-headed Gods,
 Who move no Passion justly but Contempt ;
 Who, like our dancers (light indeed and strong !)
 Do wond'rous fates, but never heard of grace. 490
 The fault is ours ; we bear those monstrous arts ;

PRESERVING HEALTH. 87

Good Heaven ! we praise them : we, with loudest
peals,

Applaud the fool that highest lifts his heels ;

And, with insipid shew of rapture, die

Of idiot notes impertinently long. 495

But he the Muse's laurel justly shares,

A Poet he, and touch'd with Heaven's own fire ;

Who with bold rage or solemn pomp of sounds,

Inflames, exalts, and ravishes the soul ;

Now tender, plaintive, sweet almost to pain, 500

In Love dissolves you ; now in sprightly strains

Breathes a gay rapture thro' your thrilling breast ;

Or melts the heart with airs divinely sad ;

Or wakes to horror the tremendous strings.

Such was the Bard, whose heavenly strains of old

Appeas'd the fiend of melancholy Saul. 506

Such was, if old and heathen fame say true,

The man who bade the Theban domes ascend,

And tam'd the savage nations with a song ;

And such the Thracian, whose harmonious lyre,

Tun'd to soft woe, made all the mountains weep ;

Sooth'd even th' inexorable powers of Hell,

And half redeem'd his lost Eurydice.

Musick exalts each Joy, allays each Grief,

Expels Diseases, softens every Pain, 515

Subdues the rage of Poison, and the Plague ;

And hence the wise of antient days ador'd

One Power of Physick, Melody, and Song.

And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

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And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

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And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

And I am: we were then: we were then:

O F
B E N E V O L E N C E :
A N
E P I S T L E t o E U M E N E S .

A
P O E M .

OF
BENEFOLICE
AN
EPISTLE TO HUMPHRES.

A
P O F M.

[91]

O F

B E N E V O L E N C E :

A N

EPISTLE to EUMENES.

KIND to my frailties still, EUMENES, hear;
Once more I try the patience of your ear.
Not oft I sing; the happier for the town,
So stun'd already they're quite stupid grown }
With monthly, daily---charming things I own. }
Happy for them, I seldom court the Nine; 6
Another art, a serious art, is mine.
Of nauseous verses offer'd once a week,
You cannot say I did it, if you're sick.
'Twas ne'er my pride to shine by flashy fits 10
Amongst the Daily Advertiser wits.
Content if some few friends indulge my name,
So slightly am I stung with love of fame,
I would not scrawl an hundred idle lines ---
Not for the praise of all the Magazines. 15

92 OF BENEVOLENCE:

Yet once a moon, perhaps, I steal a night ;
 And, if our fire APOLLO pleases, write.
 You smile ; but all the train the Muse that follow,
 Christians and dunces, still we quote Apollo.
 Unhappy still our poets will rehearse 20
 To Goths, that stare astonish'd at their verse ;
 To the rank tribes submit their virgin lays :
 So gross, so bestial, is the lust of praise !

I to found judges from the mob appeal,
 And write to those who most my subject feel. 25
 EUMENES, these dry moral lines I trust
 With you, whom nought that's moral can disgust.
 With you I venture, in plain home-spun sense,
 What I imagine of BENEVOLENCE.

Of all the monsters of the human kind, 30
 What strikes you most is the low selfish mind.
 You wonder how, without one liberal joy,
 The steady Miser can his year employ ;
 Without one friend, howe'er his fortunes thrive,
 Despis'd and hated, how he bears to live. 35
 With honest warmth of heart, with some degree
 Of pity that such wretched things should be,
 You scorn the fordid Knave --- He grins at you,
 And deems himself the wiser of the two. ---
 'Tis all but taste, howe'er we sift the case ; 40
 He has his joy, as every creature has.

AN EPISTLE TO EUMEES. 93

'Tis true, he cannot boast an angel's share,
 Yet has what happiness his organs bear:
Thou like wise madst the high seraphic Soul;
Maker omnipotent! and thou the Owl. 45
 Heav'n form'd him too, and doubtless for some use;
 But *Gran-court* knows not yet all nature's views.

'Tis chiefly taste, or blunt, or gross, or fine,
 Makes life insipid, bestial, or divine.
 Better be born with taste to little rent, 50
 Than the dull monarch of a continent.
 Without this bounty which the Gods bestow,
 Can fortune make one favourite happy?--- No.
 As well might fortune in her frolic vein,
 Proclaim an oyster sovereign of the main. 55
 Without fine nerves, and bosom justly warm'd,
 An eye, an ear, a fancy, to be charm'd,
 In vain majestic WREN expands the dome;
 Blank as pale Stucco RUBENS lines the room; 59
 Lost are the raptures of bold HANDEL's strain;
 Great TULLY storms, sweet VIRGIL sings, in vain.
 The beauteous forms of nature are effac'd;
 TEMPE's soft charms, the raging watry waste,
 Each greatly-wild, each sweet romantic scene
 Unheeded rises, and almost unseen. 65

Yet these are joys, with some of better clay,
 To soothe the toils of life's embarras'd way.

These the fine frame with charming horrors chill,
 And give the nerves delightfully to thrill.
 But of all taste the noblest and the best, 70
 The first enjoyment of the generous breast,
 Is to behold in man's obnoxious state
 Scenes of content, and happy turns of fate.
 Fair views of nature, shining works of art,
 Amuse the fancy : but those touch the heart. 75
 Chiefly for this proud epic song delights,
 For this some riot on th' *Arabian Nights*.
 Each case is ours : and for the human mind
 'Tis monstrous not to feel for all mankind.
 Were all mankind unhappy, who could taste 80
 Elysium ? or be solitarily blest ?
 Shock'd with surrounding shapes of human woe,
 All that or sense or fancy could bestow,
 You would reject with sick or coy disdain,
 And pant to see one chearful face again. 85

But if life's better prospects to behold
 So much delight the man of generous mould ;
 How happy they, the great, the godlike few,
 Who daily cultivate this pleasing view !
 This is a joy possess'd by few indeed ! 90
 Dame Fortune has so many fools to feed,
 She cannot oft afford, with all her store,
 To yield her smiles where Nature smil'd before.

AN EPISTLE TO EUMENES. 95

To sinking worth a cordial hand to lend ;
 With better fortune to surprize a friend ; 95
 To cheer the modest stranger's lonely state ;
 Or snatch an orphan family from fate ;
 To do, possess'd with Virtue's noblest fire,
 Such generous deeds as we with tears admire ;
 Deeds that, above ambition's vulgar aim, 100
 Secure an amiable, a solid fame :
 These are such joys as heaven's first favourites seize ;
 These please you now, and will for ever please.

Too seldom we great moral deeds admire ;
 The will, the power, th' occasion must conspire,
 Yet few there are so impotent and low, 106
 But can some small good offices bestow.
 Small as they are, however cheap they come,
 They add still something to the gen'ral sum :
 And him who gives the little in his power, 110
 The world acquits ; and heaven demands no more.

Unhappy he ! who feels each neighbour's woe,
 Yet no relief, no comfort can bestow.
 Unhappy too, who feel each kind essay,
 And for great favours has but words to pay ; 115
 Who, scornful of the flatterer's fawning art,
 Dreads even to pour his gratitude of heart ;
 And with a distant lover's silent pain
 Must the best movements of his soul restrain.

But men sagacious to explore mankind 120
Trace even the coyest passions of the mind.

Not only to the good we owe good-will;
In good and bad distress demands it still.
This with the generous lays distinction low,
Endears a friend, and recommends a foe. 125
Not that resentment never ought to rise;
For even excess of virtue ranks with vice:
And there are villanies no bench can awe,
That sport without the limits of the law.
No laws th' ungenerous crime would reprehend
Could I forget EUMENES was my friend: 131
In vain the gibbet or the pillory claim
The wretch who blasts a helpless virgin's fame.
Where laws are dup'd, 'tis nor unjust nor mean
To seize the proper time for honest spleen. 135
An open candid foe I could not hate,
Nor even insult the base in humbled state;
But thriving malice tamely to forgive ---
'Tis somewhat late to be so primitive.

But I detain you with these tedious lays, 140
Which few perhaps would read, and fewer praise.
No matter: could I please the polish'd few
Who taste the serious or the gay like you,
The squeamish mob may find my verses bare
Of every grace --- but curse me if I care. 145

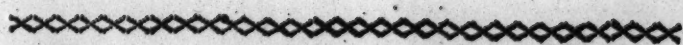
AN EPISTLE TO EUMENES. 97

Besides, I little court Parnassian fame;
There's yet a better than a poet's name.
'Twould more indulge my pride to hear it said
That I with you the paths of honour tread,
Than that amongst the proud poetic train 150
No modern boasted a more classic vein,
Or that in numbers I let loose my song,
Smooth as the THAMES, and as the SEVERN
strong,

AN EPISTLE TO RUMENES. 27

Balbes, I little court Parthenian fame;
There's yet a better than a poet's name.
I would more indulge my pride to hear it said
That I with you the paths of honour tread,
Than that amongst the great I should be known
His modest bosom a man's virtue own.
O that my name were as the Tiber's stream,
Smooth as the Tiber's stream, and deep as same.

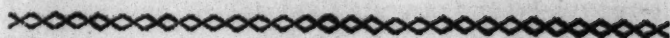




A
D A Y:

A N
E P I S T L E.

A
P O E M.



Y: A D



M O F

A
D A Y:

A N

E P I S T L E,

From G E R M A N Y.

ESCAP'D from London now four moons, and
more,

I greet gay W—— from Fulda's wasted shore,
Where cloth'd with woods a hundred hills ascend,
Where nature many a paradise has plan'd :
A land that, e'en amid contending arms,
Late smil'd with culture, and luxuriant charms ;
But now the hostile scythe has bar'd her soil,
And her sad peasants starve for all their toil.

What news to-day ?---I ask you not what rogue,
What paltry imp of fortune's now in vogue ;
What forward blundering fool was last preferr'd,
By mere pretence distinguish'd from the herd ;

N

With what new cheat the gaping town is smit ;
 What crazy scribler reigns the present wit ;
 What stuff for winter the two Booths have mixt ;
 What bouncing mimic grows a Roscius next,
 Wave all such news : I've seen too much, my friend,
 To stare at any wonders of that kind.

News, none have I : you know I never had ;
 I never long'd the Day's dull lye to spread ;
 I left to gossips that sweet luxury,
 More in the secrets of the great than I,
 To nurses, midwives, all the slippery train,
 That swallow all, and bring up all again :
 Or did I e'er a brief event relate,
 You found it soon at length in the Gazette.

Now for the weather—This is England still
 For ought I find, as good, and quite as ill.
 Even now the pond'rous rain perpetual falls,
 Drowns every camp, and crouds our hospitals.
 This soaking deluge all unstrings my frame,
 Dilutes my sense, and suffocates my flame — }
 'Tis that which makes these present lines so tame. }
 The parching east wind still pursues me too — }
 Is there no climate where this fiend ne'er flew ? — }
 By Heaven, it flays Japan, perhaps Peru ! }
 It blasts all earth with its envenom'd breath,
 That scatters discord, rage, diseases, death.

'Twas the first plague that burst Pandora's chest,
And with a livid smile sow'd all around the rest.

[flies,
Heaven guard my friend from every plague that
Still grant him health, whence all the pleasures rise.
But oft diseases from slow causes creep,
And in this doctrine as (thank Heav'n) I'm deep,

Mean time excuse me that I slyly snatch
The only theme in which I shine your match.

You study early : Some indulge at night, Y
Their prudish muse steals in by candle-light,
Shy, as th' Athenian bird, she shuns the day,
And finds December genial more than May.
But happier you who court the early sun,
For morning visits no debauch draw on ;
Nor so the spirits, health, or sight impair,
As those that pass in the raw midnight air.

The task of breakfast o'er ; that peevish, pale,
That lownging, yawning, most ungenial meal ;
Rush out, before those fools rush in to worry ye,
Whose business is to be idle in a hurry,

Who kill your time as frankly as their own,
 And feel no civil hints e'er to be gone.
 These flies all fairly flung, whene'er the house,
 Your country's business, or your friends, allows,
 Rush out, enjoy the fields and the fresh air;
 Ride, walk, or drive, the weather foul or fair.
 Yet in the torrid months I would reverse
 This method, leave behind both prose and verse;
 With the grey dawn the hills and forest roam,
 And wait the sultry noon embower'd at home,
 While every rural sound improves the breeze,
 The railing stream, the busy rooks, and murmu-
 of the bees.

You'll hardly chuse these chearful jaunts alone—
 Except when some deep scheme is carrying on,
 With you at Chelsea oft may I behold
 The hopeful bud of sense her bloom unfold;
 With you I'd walk to * * * * *
 To rich, insipid, Hackney, if you will;
 With you no matter where, while we're together,
 I scorn no spot on earth, and curse no weather:

When dinner comes, amid the various feast,
 That crowns your genial board, where every guest,
 Or grave, or gay, is happy, and at home,
 And none e'er sighed for the mind's elbow-room;

I warn you still to make your chief repast
On one plain dish, and trifle with the rest.

Beef, in a fever, if your stomach crave it,
Ox-cheek, or mawkish cod, be sure you have it,
For still the constitution, even the case,
Directs the stomach; this informs the taste:
And what the taste in her capricious fits
Coily, or even indifferently admits,
The peevish stomach, or disdains to toil,
Or indolently works to vapid chyle.

This instinct of the taste so seldom errs,
That if you love, yet smart for cucumbers,
Or plumbs of bad repute, you'll likely find
'Twas for you separated what nature join'd,
The spicy kernel here, and there the rind,

'Tis strange how blindly we from nature stray!
The only creatures we that miss their way!
To err is human, man's prerogative,
Who's too much sense by nature's laws to live:
Wiser than nature he must thwart her plan,
And ever will be spoiling, where he can.
'Tis well he cannot ocean change to cream,
Nor earth to a gilded cake; not e'en could tame

Niagara's steep abyſs to crawl down ſtairs †,
 Or dreſs in roſes the dire Cordelliers ‡ :
 But what he can he does : well can he trim
 A charming ſpot into a childiſh whim ;
 Can every gen'rous gift of nature ſpoil,
 And rates their merits by his coſt and toil.
 Whate'er the land, whate'er the ſeas produce,
 Of perfect texture, and exalted juice,
 He pampers, or to fulſom fat, or drains,
 Refines, and bleaches, till no taſte remains.

* * * * *

Enough to fatten fools, or drive the dray,
 But plagues and death to thoſe of finer clay.

No corner elſe, 'tis not to be denied,
 Of all our iſle ſo frankly is ſupplied
 With groſs productions, and adulterate fare,
 As one renowned abode, whoſe name I ſpare.
 They cram all poultry, that the hungry fox
 Would loath to touch them ; e'en their boated ox
 Sometimes is glutted ſo with unctuous ſpoil,
 That what ſeems beef is rather rap-feed oil.
 D'ye know what brawn is ?—O th' unhappy beaſt!
 He ſtands eternal, and is doom'd to feaſt,
 Till — But the nauſeous proceſs I forbear —
 Only beware of brawn — be ſure, beware !

† Vide Chatſworth, 1759.

‡ Les Cordelleira's des Andes are a chain of hills, which
 run through South America.

Yet brawn has taste — it has : their veal has none,
 Save what the butcher's breath inspires alone ;
 Just heaven one day may send them hail for wheat,
 Who spoil all veal because it should be white.
 'Tis hard to say of what compounded paste,
 Their bread is wrought, for it betrays no taste,
 Whether 'tis flour and chalk, or chalk and flour
 Shell'd and refin'd, till it has taste no more ;
 But if the lump be white, and white enough,
 No matter how insipid, dry, or tough.
 In salt itself the sapid flavour fails,
 Burnt alom for the love of white prevails :
 While tasteless cole-seed we for mustard swallow,
 'Tis void of zest indeed — but still 'tis yellow.
 Parsnip, or parsley root, the rogues will soon
 Scrape for horse-radish, and 'twill pass unknown,
 For by the colour, not the taste we prove all,
 As hens will sit on chalk, if 'tis but oval.

I must with caution the cook's reign invade,
 Hot as the fire, and hasty from his trade,

* * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * *

A cook of genius, bid him roast a hare,
 By all that's hot and horrible would swear,

Parch native dryness ! Zounds, that's not the
thing —

But stew him, and he might half dine a King.
His gen'rous broth I should almost prefer
To turtle soup, though turtle travels far.

You think me nice, perhaps : yet I could dine
On roasted rabbit ; or fat turkey and chine ;
Or fulsome haslet ; or moist drily cram
My throat with tasteless fillet and wet ham ;
But let me ne'er of mutton-saddle eat,
That solid phantom, that most specious cheat ;
Yet loin is passable, he was no fool
Who said the half is better than the whole :

*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*

But I have cook'd and carv'd enough and more,
We come to drinking next. 'Till dinner's o'er,
I would all claret, even champain forbear,
Give me fresh water — Bless me with small-beer.
But still whate'er you drink with cautious lip
Approach, survey, and e'er you swallow, sip ;

For often, O defend all honest throats !
The reeling wasp on the drench'd borage floats.
I've known a dame, sage else as a divine,
For brandy whip off Ipecacuan wine ;
And I'm as sure amid your careless glee,
You'll swallow Port one time for Cote-rotie.
But you aware of that Lethean flood,
Will scarce repeat the dose—forbid you should !
'Tis such a deadly blow to all that's bright,
'Twould soon encumber e'en your fancy's flight :
And if 'tis true what some wise preacher says,
That we our gen'rous ancestors disgrace,
The fault from this pernicious fountain flows,
Hence half our follies, half our crimes and woes ;
And ere our maudlin genius mounts again,
'Twill cost a sea of Claret and Champain }
Of this retarding glue to rinse the nation's brain. }
The mud-fed carp, refines amid the springs,
And time and Burgundy might do great things ;
But health and pleasure we for trade despise,
For Portugal's grudg'd gold our genius dies.
O hapless race ! O land to be bewail'd !
With murders, treasons, horrid deaths appal'd ;
Where dark-red skies with livid thunders frown,
While earth convulsive shakes her cities down ;
Where hell in heaven's name holds her impious
court,
And the grape bleeds out that black poison, Port ;

Sad poison to themselves, to us still worse,
Brewd and rebrewd, a double, treble curse.

Toss'd in the crowd of various rules I find,
Still some material business left behind :

* * * * *

The fig, the gooseberry, beyond all grapes,
Mellower to eat, as rich to drink perhaps.
But pleasures of this kind are best enjoyed
Beneath the tree, or by the fountain side,
Ere the quick soul, and dewy bloom exhale,
And vainly melt into the thankless gale.

* * * * *

Who from the full meal yield to natural rest,
A short repose ; 'tis strange how soon you'll find
A second morn rise chearful in your mind :
Besides it softly, kindly, sooths away
The saddest hour to some that damps the day.
But if you're coy to sleep, before you spread
Some easy-trotting poet's lines — you're dead
At once : even these may hasten your repose,
Now rapid verse, now halting nearer prose ;

There smooth, here rough, what I suppose you'd
chuse,

As men of taste hate sameness in the muse :
Yes, I'd adjourn all drinking till 'tis late,
And then indulge, but at a moderate rate.
By heaven not * * * with all his genial wit,
Should ever tempt me after twelve to sit—
You laugh—at noon you say : I mean at night. }

I long to read your name once more again,
But while at Cassel, all such longing's vain.
Yet Cassel else no sad retreat I find,
While good and amiable Gayot's * my friend, }
Generous and plain, the friend of human-kind ; }
Who scorns the little-minded's partial view ;
One you would love, one that would relish you.
With him sometimes I sup, and often dine,
And find his presence cordial more than wine.
There lively, genial, friendly, Goy and I,
Touch glasses oft to one, whose company
Would—but what's this?—Farewell—within two
hours
We march for Hoxter—ever, ever yours.

* *Monf. de Gayot, fils, conseiller d'état, et intendant
de l'armée Française en Allemagne.*

AN EPISTLE

There's nothing here rough, what's rough is you
Chin

As men of taste have thought it best
I, I'd adjourn all drinking till the last
and then indulge, but at a moderate rate
By heaven not a drop of wine shall I
Should ever tempt me after that
You laugh—no more you say: I know of right

I long to reach your gate and sit
But while at Caste, all such longings I quit
Yes Caste this is the best I find
While good and amiable Caste is my friend
Generous and plain, the friend of human-kind
Who learns the little-minded's partial view



One you would love
With him tomorrow
And find his presence
I here live, gentle
Took place of so one
Words—how what's this?—For what's within two
hours

We march for Honor—every step we take
Mont de Cassin, the mountain
And I am free of the mountain

XXXXXX
S K E T C H E S:

O R,

E S S A Y S

O N

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.
XXXXXX

SKETCHES

OF

ESSAYS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS

T H E

P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following papers chuses to call them **SKETCHES**; as the least imperfect amongst them is to a laboured treatise what the painter's outlines, or his first rude draughts, are to a finished picture. This declaration he hopes will be accepted, by the proper judges of writing, as a sufficient apology for any

thing, either in thought or expression, that may be found careless or incorrect in his *ESSAYS*. He owns he would have given these little loose fragments much bolder strokes, as well as more delicate touches: but as an author's renown depends at present upon the mobility, he dreads the danger of writing too well; and feels the value of his own labour too sensibly to bestow it where, in all probability, it might only serve to depreciate his performance.

S K E T C H E S.

Of LANGUAGE.

ALMOST every one, that can read, pretends to judge of the author's stile, as it is called : but how few are there who knows good language from bad ! Even the best judges are sometimes divided in their opinions ; for want, it would seem, of a common standard by which the merits of different languages, as well as of different writers in the same language, might be compared. If I was to reduce my own private idea of the best language to a definition ; I should call it the shortest, clearest, and easiest way of expressing one's thoughts, by the most harmonious arrangement of the best chosen words, both for meaning and sound. The best language is strong and expressive, without stiffness or affectation ; short and concise, without being either obscure or ambiguous ; and easy, and flowing, and disengaged, without one undetermined or superfluous word.

Of GENIUS.

THERE is a standard of right and wrong in the nature of things, of beauty and deformity, both in the natural and moral world. And as different minds happen to be more or less exquisite, the more or less sensibly do they perceive the various degrees of good and bad, and are the more or less susceptible of being charmed with what is right or beautiful, and disgusted with what is wrong or deformed. It is chiefly this sensibility that constitutes genius; to which a sound head and a good heart are as essential as a good imagination. And a man of true genius must necessarily have as exquisite a feeling of the moral beauties, as of whatever is great or beautiful in the works of nature, or masterly in the arts which imitate nature, in poetry, painting, statuary, and music.

On the other side, where the heart is very bad, the genius and taste, if there happen to be any pretensions to them, will be found shocking and unnatural. Nero would be nothing less than a poet; but his verses were what one may call most *villainously* bad. His taste of magnificence and

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luxury was horribly glaring, extravagant, and unnatural to the last degree.

Caligula's taste was so outrageously wrong, that he detested the works of the sweet Mantuan poet more passionately than ever Mæcenas admired them; and if Virgil had unfortunately lived down to those times in which that monster appeared, he would probably have been tortured to death for no other crime but that he wrote naturally, and like an honest man.

True genius may be said to consist of a perfect polish of soul, which receives and reflects the images that fall upon it, without warping or distortion. And this fine polish of soul is, I believe, constantly attended with what philosophers call the moral truth.

There are minds which receive objects truly, and feel the impressions they ought naturally to make, in a very lively manner, but want the faculty of reflecting them; as there are people who, I suppose, feel all the charms of poetry without being poets themselves.

Of TASTE.

OUR notion of taste may be easily understood by what we have said upon the subject of genius ; for mere good taste is nothing else but genius without the power of execution.

It must be born ; and is to be improved chiefly by being accustomed, and the earlier the better, to the most exquisite objects of taste in its various kinds. For the taste in writing and painting, and in every thing else, is insensibly formed upon what we are accustomed to ; as well as taste in eating and drinking. One who from his youth has been used to drink nothing but heavy dismal port, will not easily acquire a relish for claret or Burgundy.

In the most stupid ages there is more good taste than one would at first sight imagine. Even the present, abuse it with what contemptuous epithets you please, cannot be totally void of it. As long as there are noble, humane, and generous dispositions amongst mankind, there must be good taste. For, in general, I do not say always, the taste will be in proportion to those moral qualities and that

fenfibility of mind from which they take their rife. And while many, amongst the great and the learned, are allowed to have tafte for no better reason than that it is their own opinion, it is often poffeffed by thofe who are not confcious of it, and dream as little of pretending to it as to a ftar and garter. An honeft farmer, or fhepherd, who is acquainted with no language but what is fpoken in his own country, may have a much truer relifh of the Englifh writers than the moft dogmatical pedant that ever erected himfelf into a commentator, and from his Gothic chair, with an ill-bred arrogance, dictated falfe criticifm to the gaping multitude.

But even thofe who are endued with good natural tafte, often judge implicitly and by rote, without ever confulting their own tafte. Instances of this paffive indolence, or rather this unconfciousnefs of one's own faculties, appear every day; not only in the fine arts, but in cafes where the mere *tafte*, according to the original meaning of the word, is alone concerned. For I am pofitive there are many thoufands, who, if they were to bring their own palate to a fevere examination, would difcover that they really find a more delicious flavour in mutton than in venifon, in flounder than in turbut, and yet prefer middling or bad venifon

to the best mutton ; that is, what is scarcest and dearest, and consequently what is, from the folly of mankind, the most in vogue, to what is really the most agreeable to their own private taste.

In matter of taste, the public, for the most part, suffers itself to be led by a few who, perhaps, are really no judges ; but who, under the favour of some advantages of title, place, or fortune, set up for judges, and are implicitly followed even by those who have taste. These washy dictators have learnt at school to admire such authors as have for ages been possessed of an undisputed renown : but they would never have been the first to have discovered strokes of true genius in a cotemporary writer, though they had lived at the court of Augustus or of Q. Elizabeth.

So undistinguished is our taste, that if the flattest dunce this fruitful age can boast of, could by some artful imposture prepossess the public, that the most insipid of all his own bread-sauce compositions, to be published next winter, was a piece of Milton's, or any other celebrated author, recovered from dust and obscurity, it would be received with universal applause, and perhaps be translated into French before the town had doated six weeks upon it. One might venture to say

too, that if a work of true spirit and genius was to be introduced into the world, under the name of some writer of low reputation, it would be rejected even by the greatest part of those who pretend to lead the taste. And no wonder, while an eminent vintner has mistaken his own old hock at nine shillings the bottle for that of five.

Of TURGID WRITING.

NOISE and bluster is what passes for the sublime with the great majority of readers; and there are people who think nothing too strong or solid but what is clumsy. The genteel dignity of Whitehall, and the elegant cheerful simplicity of St. Paul's in Covent Garden, may stand as long as that purse-proud wittol the Treasury, or even the squat solidity of the Horse Guards.

Unnatural, forced, exaggerated swelling, whether in sentiments or language, is owing to false taste and want of true genius. The Hercules of Goltzius is that very sublime in person. It is intended to express the most excessive robustness of figure: but the painter, in endeavouring to represent the human form in its utmost degree of

strength, has aggravated the demi-god into a mere awkward monster ; as ridiculous a giant as either of the brothers at Guildhall.

To take it in another view, that clumsy robustness of manner (which, by the way does not partake of true vigour, for that always performs its business without straining) is the same thing to the spirited ease which is necessary to good writing, that the awkward efforts of a huge, heavy, ill-shaped dry-horse, and a lame one too, are to the most supple Arabian that ever was drest by St. Amour.

That writing can never be very good which is not easy ; but it does not follow that all easy writing is good. Writing may be very easy, and yet, heaven knows, very insipid. And when you begin to suspect that your writing is easy indeed but wants spirit, the wisest thing you can do is to let your pen drop and go to bed.

*Of AFFECTATION of WIT, and
FLORID WRITING.*

IT is not always so easy to get rid of an impertinent companion as of a silly book ; otherwise to be for ever aiming at wit would be as teizing and intolerable in writing as in conversation. Too much even of genuine wit is cloying, and the vanity of displaying it incessantly will fatigue and disgust every reader whose taste is true. Olives, caveare, anchovies, and Dutch herrings, do very well in their place ; but, in the name of all the hospitable powers, do not oblige us to dine upon them. Let us first lay a foundation of good plain beef or mutton, if you please : for there is no living upon pickles or sweet-meats alone.

The ground-work of every performance, even of those which admit or require the greatest profusion of ornament, ought to be plain and simple. Observe nature : In the meadow, the sweet green, which never dazzles the sight, is the predominant colour ; while the gaudy flowers, red, white, yellow, blue, and purple, are carelessly interspersed. This is infinitely more pleasing and beautiful than

that insipid, childish, uncomfortable bauble called a flower-knot ; and the wild variety of the woods as far excels the richest plantation of flowering shrubs. I would not be above taking a hint even from the mechanic arts : if a suit of cloaths is overcharged with lace, it becomes taudry and ungentle. In every work, the true taste is to dispose the ornaments with ease and propriety, and not to be affectedly or too ostentatiously prodigal of them. By this means you bestow upon your performance an elegant richness, and such a modest dignity as will please every true eye ; though it may quite escape the notice of the vulgar, and false critics of all ranks, who delight in nothing but what is glaring, tawdry, and ostentatious. — No ; I beg their pardon : for they are sometimes in raptures, or seem to be so, with what is altogether insipid.

Let the ornaments be never so well executed, if they are not easily and naturally introduced, they will have an aukward effect. The most beautiful woman may disgust you by ostentation, and a declared intention to charm. As often as it is possible to contrive it so, the ornaments should be, or at least appear to be, of some use towards the main design of the work : but when they are bluntly produced, and with too barefaced a

purpose to dazzle or entertain, instead of your admiration, they raise your contempt. A masque, a coronation, or procession upon our stage, is, for the most part, an insipid, tawdry, tiresome shew. But if it was really an ornament, to introduce it with propriety and grace, it ought to be contrived as an incident to help on the business of the piece : as in the masque in *Romeo and Juliet*; and the funeral procession, such as it is, in *Richard the third*; which, notwithstanding some want of decorum, as the critics call it, and of probability in the scene, has still some kind of pretence to assist in the business of the fable.

To conclude : the ornamental parts of a work cost the least trouble to a writer who has any luxuriance of imagination. To support the plain parts with an easy dignity, so as they shall neither become flat on the one hand, nor disgustingly stiff on the other, is a much more difficult task. And yet, if you succeed never so well here, you will receive little thanks from the generality of readers; who will be apt to imagine they could easily perform the same kind of work themselves, till they come to try it.

Of OBSCURE WRITING.

AS the first end of all writing and speaking is to be understood, it seems to follow that obscurity must be the greatest fault in either. One would think it needless to insist upon this ; yet there are readers so absurd as to admire an author the more for every now and then plunging into the unintelligible : as a dash of mystery procures more reverence from weak minds to any scheme of religion than its most virtuous or most rational precepts. Some clumsy scholars too, who must needs be making awkward love to the scornful muses, and tumbling them with their coarse paws, when they come to an obscure passage in an author, whom they are determined to admire, tell us we must not always expect the same clearness in writers of the first class, as in the more inferior ones. Such is their cant even in talking of dramatic writing, in which obscurity is more unpardonable than any other kind of production. But the dullest and most shallow of those critics could write obscurely himself ; and if he writes much, he must have ill luck not to do it sometimes. For to write obscurely requires no other talent or skill than to express one's meaning

imperfectly; or if that is not enough, to write without any meaning at all. However, amongst a different kind of critics, perspicuity has always been reckoned an essential quality to good writing; and if sometimes a great author is found deficient in this article, it only shews how difficult it is to express some things with clearness and ease. For one may very safely presume that no good writer, where it is prudent to speak out, ever expressed himself obscurely from choice.

Of the Modern Art of SPELLING.

A N author seems reduced to great extremities, who flies to new Spellings to distinguish himself.

These innovations are pedantic and conceited trifles; and the best, or rather the only good reason for ever altering a long established spelling is, that the writing may come the nearer to the pronunciation. But our reformers in the art of spelling, who at present chiefly confine themselves to one class of words, to substantive nouns and verbs derived from the LATIN, such as *honour, favour, labour*, while they write *honor, favor, labor*, in-

crease the distance between the writing and pronunciation, or rather they produce one where there was none before ; for the *u* in all those words, except in a few where it is generally omitted in the common spelling, as *horror*, *terror*, is at least as much felt in the pronunciation as the retained vowel *o*. Some have, unhappily enough, subjected to the same innovation other words, which contain the diphthong *ou*, though they have no relation at all to the *LATIN*, and write *endeavor*, *neighbor*, *behavior*. Why do not they prescribe this hated *u* in *adjectives* too ; and instead of *invidious*, *odious*, *glorious*, write *invidios*, *odios*, *glorios* ? As they have gone so far, I can see no good reason why they should stop short here.

Trifles betray the character : and it is somewhat strange, if it has escaped the penetration of those philosophers who have employed part of their talents in characterising the age, that there hardly needed any other instance to distinguish the present as an *unmanly* one, than this very aversion to the honest vowel *u* ; without whose assistance it would be impossible to pronounce some of the most important and most interesting words, to any thing of a man, in the whole English language. And it is not unworthy our observation here, that a late noble author, whose parts were manly enough in the early days of his life, did not begin to ca-

figate his spelling after this manner, till he was considerably advanced in years.

Of NEW WORDS.

IT is the easiest thing imaginable to coin words. The most ignorant of the mobility are laughed at for it. What best can justify the introducing a new word is necessity, where there is not an established one to express our meaning. But while all the world understands what is meant by the word *pleasure*, which sounds very well too, what occasion can there be for saying *volupty* * ?

Nothing can deform a language so much as an inundation of a few words and phrases. It is, indeed, the readiest way to demolish it. If there is any need to illustrate the barbarous effect which a mixture of new words must produce, only consider how a discourse, patched all over with sentences in different languages, would sound; or how oddly it would strike you in a serious conversation to hear, from the same person, a mixture of all the various dialects and tones of the several

* See some posthumous works published a few year ago in Defence of our holy religion.

counties and shires of the three kingdoms, though it is still the same language. To make it sensible to the eye; how greatly would a mixture of Roman, Italic, Greek, and Saxon characters deform a page? A picture, imitating the style of different masters, which is commonly called a gallery of painters, can never be pleasing for the same reasons, want of union and harmony.

The present licentious humour of coining and borrowing words, seems to portend no good to the English language: And it is grievous to think with what *volupty* two or *poetararorencouroac** eminent personages have *opiniatred* the *inchoation* of such *futile* barbarisms.

In short, the liberty of coining words ought to be used with great modesty. Horace, they say, gave but two, and Virgil only one to the Latin tongue, which was squeamish enough not to swallow those, even from such hands, without reluctance.

I cannot conclude without putting our writers and speakers in mind of an excellent advice from

* The word for the number *three*, in one of the American languages, which, to judge by this specimen, cannot be barbarous for want of polysyllables.

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Mr. Pope on this subject of new and old words :

*Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside*.*

Of SUPERANNUATED WORDS.

INSTEAD of creating a parcel of awkward new words, I imagine it would be an improvement to degrade many old ones from their peerage. I am but a private man, and without authority; but an absolute prince, if he was of my opinion, would make it capital to say *encroach* or *encroachment*, or any thing that belongs to *encroaching*. I would commit *inculcate*, for all its latinity, to the care of the paviours; and it should never appear above ground again. If you have the least sympathy with the human ear, never say *purport* while you breathe; nor *betwixt*, except you have first repeated *between* till you are quite tired. *Methinks* strongly resembles the broken language of a German in his first attempts to speak English. *Methought* lies under the same objection, but it sounds better.

It is full time that *froward* should be turned out of all good company, especially as *perverse* is rea-

† See Mr. Pope's Essay on Criticism.

dy at hand to supply his place. *Vouchsafe* is a very civil gentleman ; but as his courtesy is somewhat old-fashioned, we wish he would *deign* or *condescend*, or *be pleased* to retire.

From what rugged road, I wonder, did *swerve* deviate into the English language ?—— But this *subject matter* ! — In the name of every thing that is disgusting and detestable, what is it ? Is it one or two ugly words ? What is the meaning of it ? Confound me if I ever could guess ! Yet one dares hardly ever peep into a preface, for fear of being stared in the face with this nasty *subject matter*.

Wittol is an old-fashioned, ill-sounding word ; but as there is frequent occasion for it, and no other word so perfectly expresses its meaning, we cannot afford to part with it.

But to pick up all the awkward words, which continue to be as current among us as worn-out-fixpences, it would be necessary to peruse the dictionary from A to Z. A most desperate uncomfortable labour ! As heart-breaking a task as it would be to wade through half a volume of the Statutes at large ; nay, by heaven, I would almost as soon take it upon me to read the most infipid tragedy that hath been brought upon the

stage these seven years. But if one could submit to this labour, and should presume to set a mark upon every word one did not relish, there may be people of a different opinion; and no private person has authority enough to prohibit the use of any word, if he find it ever so intolerable to his own ear. For my part, I shall endeavour to pass through life as inoffensively as possible, both to the world and my own conscience; and hope, and pray, I may never be reduced to the necessity of using

One Word, which dying, I would wish to blot †.

Of MUSIC.

MUSIC, I presume, can no further be properly called one of the imitative arts, than as it expresses the passions; and in this respect only can be admitted, as the sister of poetry and painting. So that mere harmony has little pretension to such an alliance; for it is no more music than mere versification is poetry.

The Italian compositions, I speak of the modern ones, for the most part mean nothing beyond har-

† See the Epilogue to Mr. Thomson's *Coriolanus*.

monious sound ; and are as much inferior to whatever is truly pathetic in music, as a tragedy, which depends upon noise and shew, is to a plain passionate one, which represents a natural and moving picture of life, and of the human mind. A family piece, even such an one as the celebrated work of Vandyke at Wilton, where, though the drawing is exact, and the attitudes easy and natural, the figures are all gaping and unemployed, is a mighty tame performance when compared with a grand history of Raphael, Rubens, or the same Vandyke himself, where every thing is expressive, warm, passionate, and interesting.

But it is not mere harmony ; difficulty of execution is the sublime, at which the greatest part of our modern masters aspire ; as if it required the least genius either to compose or execute difficult music. While these are the objects of emulation amongst our composers and performers, the opera is likely to continue a most ravishing entertainment.

We run mad, or rather foolish, after this imported music ; while perhaps we have much better of our own. Most of the modern Italian compositions only trifle with the ear : the Welch, the Scotch, the Irish music, reaches the heart. The

productions of our present Italian masters are thrummed over for a season, because they are new ; and forgot for ever afterwards, because when you have heard them twenty times, you find them still as insipid as at first. The music, which charmed these islands perhaps long before the boasted revival of this art in Italy, or rather in Flanders, is as established as the antient classics ; and those compositions, short and simple as they are, never become thread-bare, but give delight and rapture every time they are heard.

There is a certain resemblance of air between the music of the antient Britons, the Irish, and the Scotch ; and yet they are all very distinguishable from one another. There is a remarkable difference of character even between the music of the north and south of Scotland. The northern is generally martial, for the most part melancholy, and bears a strong resemblance to the Irish : the southern is pastoral and amorous, with such an air of tender melancholy, as love and solitude, in a wild romantic country, are apt to inspire. Each of them has a wildness peculiar to itself. The wild spirit of the south breaths a sweeter air of rural solitude ; that of the north is more solemn, and sometimes what one might almost call dreadful. Besides, the gay sprightly airs which each of

them has produced, are in as different styles as the genius and manners of the people in the two extremities of Scotland, or the face of the countries they inhabit; both of which are wild, but I believe, with a very different air.

The British poetry is universally allowed, by the best judges of both, to be much superior to the Italian; and why should you wonder to find the music of the one country brought into competition with that of the other? The music of these islands seem to agree in character with that of the antients, which, from the accounts we have of it, excelled in simplicity and passion. How simple the music must have been that delighted Greece in the days of Alcæus, Sappho, Pindar, and Anacreon, seems to appear from the very make of their capital instrument the lyre.

Of ENGLISH VERSE.

RHYME, we have often been told, is a modern invention; though, if it was a crime, it might perhaps be proved to be not so very modern neither. It is reckoned a barbarous one by some pedants; who finding, I suppose, by the opinion of better judges than themselves, that it is abomin-

able in Greek and Latin, conclude that it must not be less so in French and in English. The contrary is evident to every one that has ears and, dares think for himself: for in English, rhyme is capable of much harmony; and the French can have no versification without it. But some people, who ought to know better, seem to make no allowance for the original deference between one language and another; and are ready to quarrel with the English as a barbarous language, because it is not Latin or Greek. They do not consider that every language has powers and graces peculiar to itself; and that what is becoming in one would be quite ridiculous in another. Of this it is sufficient to produce one obvious example: the transposition of words, which gives such a grace and spirit to the Greek and Latin languages, and without which they would become detestably flat and insipid, does not at all suit the genius of the English; except sometimes in poetry: and, by the way, I am afraid there are too many ungraceful transpositions current amongst our English poets.

But it is not only a few obscure pedants, who are thus dissatisfied with their mother-tongue; and would be glad for its improvement to torture it from its native shape, some into Latin and others

into French : for attempts of this nature have been actually made by men of superior note. Sir Philip Sidney, who, notwithstanding his affected manner, must be allowed to have possessed a great share of genius, would every now and then spur up his gallant English into a most unbecoming ridiculous trot after the Greek and Latin hexameters. It is certainly impossible to introduce the Greek and Latin measures into English poetry with any success ; yet Sir Philip was fond of this project, and pursued it with a strange obstinacy. He recommended it to Spenser ; but Spenser had too true an ear to relish such awkward unnatural versification, or countenance it by his example. At least there is nothing remains of him to shew that he ever practised it. There have been attempts made since to the same purpose by Milton, and some later authors. But there never was any thing seen so ungraceful, or so despicably pedantic, as all essays of that kind which have hitherto appeared. I do not know that it has ever been tried, except by Milton in some parts of his *Samson* ; but of all the Greek and Latin measures, the iambic seems the most capable of being adopted into the English poetry.

I have either read or heard that a poet of the last century, whom I shall not name, because I

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am not perfectly sure of the fact, pretended to some secrets in versification, which he did not chuse to communicate. If it was so, it shewed a jealousy unworthy of so great a master of numbers: he might safely enough, for his own superiority, have published those secrets whatever they were; for it is impossible they ever could be of much use. He could easily advise you to vary your pauses, and tell you which are the most graceful: but these and all such precepts are nothing to the purpose; a good ear will naturally produce harmony without the least regard or attention to rules; and there is no cure for a bad one. The only way to improve the ear, whether good or bad, is to accustom it to the most harmonious writing.

Blank verse admits of a greater variety of pauses than rhyme; and is partly for that reason the fittest for works of any considerable length. But in English poetry I question whether it is possible, with any success to write odes, epistles, elegies, pastorals, or satires, without rhyme. And it happens luckily, that in these short pieces the ear has not time to be tired with the return of the chimes: which, in my humble opinion, had better sometimes play a little false to one another than be for ever scrupulously exact; provided such licences never shock the ear.

It does not require a very exquisite ear to write too smooth or even harmonious lines running : yet in rhyme, a poet, who is always very careful to polish his couplet, may pass with the multitude for a great master in versification. But as long as his harmony is confined within such narrow bounds, he writes but like a school-boy, who keeps in the lines only with the help of ruled paper.

Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope took offence, one does not know why, at the triplet, and very rarely condescended to admit it into their verse. It is true, it had been used to a nauseous excess by some tasteless writers ; and Mr. Pope's own imitation of Rochester might justly enough give him a disgust to the triplet for his whole life. Yet it contributes not a little to the grace of Dryden's versification : and I can see no reason why it should be prohibited now ; as it gives a variety to the number, which in rhyme is sufficiently limited to require such an help : besides it may often be in your power by its means to compress within three lines, what must otherwise straggle into four, and of course become languid and spiritless.

Variety is the soul of versification ; and the march of the lines ought to be adapted to the subject. The measure is the same in both ; but had

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Horace wrote his epistles or satires in the same kind of numbers with Virgil's *Æneid*, it would have been a monstrous impropriety; like hunting the fox or hare on a war-horse, with the equipage of a general at a review, or on the day of battle. He knew very well, that in familiar writing, dignity and versification would be quite ridiculous. Accordingly in those parts his numbers are loose, rambling, and often almost prosaic. But in his most careless and licentious periods he seldom or never hurts the ear: and as often as there is any thing great in his sentiment, his expression and numbers rise in proportion, and sustain themselves with a naked unaffected dignity; till without falling he descends on easy and dexterous wings to the familiar again..

It does not seem quite foreign to the present subject to take notice of a certain French author, who after having given it as his opinion, that *Mr. Pope is the most harmonious of all the English poets*, adds, with a very pleasing assurance, that *he has reduced the sharp hissings of the English trumpet to the sweet sounds of the flute* †. It is no great wonder, that

† Mr. Pope — Est, je crois, le poete le plus elegant, le plus correct, et ce qui est encore beaucoup, le plus harmonieux qu'ait eu l'Angleterre. Il a reduit les siffimens aigres de la trompette Angloise au sons doux de la flute. VOLTAIRE — Lettres sur les Anglois.

one who is apt to write much at random, should presume to talk so contemptuously of a manly, an elegant, and harmonious language which he plainly appears to have but a very superficial acquaintance. But who ever talked before of the *bissings of a trumpet*—or of *sharp bissings*? We have all heard of the *hoarse trumpet*; but the *bissing trumpet* is an instrument we are not yet acquainted with. However, to pass these improprieties, this compliment to Mr. Pope shews how well our critic is qualified to pronounce sentence upon the English poets. No one is more sensible than I of Mr. Pope's merit; but his blindest admirer might startle at the preference bestowed upon him here. For, not to mention the great names of Spenser, Shakespear, and Milton, upon such an occasion, let us only compare Mr. Pope in this point of view with a writer upon whom, as they say, he formed himself; and whom not only in his own opinion, but in that of many others, he is thought to have excelled in the art of versifying. It is almost needless, after this, to say that I mean Dryden, whose versification I take to be the most musical that has yet appeared in rhyme. Round, sweet, pompous, spirited, and various; it flows with such a happy volubility, such animated and masterly negligence, as I am afraid will not soon be excelled. From the fineness of his ear, his prose too is perhaps the

sweetest, the most mellow and generous, that the English language has yet produced.

Had Mr. Voltaire known as much of the English poets as he pretends to do, he might have found something like the *sweet sound of the flute* in Mr. Waller; who wrote before Mr. Pope was born. Mr. Voltaire, before he presumed to compare the English poets, should have known, that before Mr. Waller appeared, there was one Edward Spenser a poet, whose verse was not merely indolently smooth, but spirited also and harmonious. And if Mr. Voltaire was a perfect and a candid judge in this case, he would own that there was more harmony in many of the English poets — much more than the French language can attain to, or an ear debauched by the French versification is capable of relishing.

Of the VERSIFICATION *of* ENGLISH TRAGEDY.

THE greatest part of our modern writers of tragedy seem to think it enough to write mere blank verse; no matter however hard it be, how-

ever void of swelling and harmony. Even those of them who write the best numbers study to be solemn and pompous throughout, and affect a monotony of heroic versification, from the first appearance of the heroine with her confidante to her last fatal exit; without the least regard to the variety of passions, which express themselves in quick or slow, flowing or interrupted, in languishing or impetuous movements.

The proper versification of English tragedy is most certainly blank verse; but as different from the solemn and majestic movement of heroic poetry as the iambic is from the hexameter. What a monstrous production would a Greek or Latin tragedy in hexameter verse appear! — The ancients found the grave iambic their proper measure for tragedy, as it is at the same time capable of all the dignity which that kind of poem requires, and descends with the greatest ease to the level of prose and conversation. Such as is the iambic in Latin, is the blank verse in English: but by no means the blank verse of *Paradise Lost*.

The numbers ought to be accommodated to the passion: and though in some parts of the tragedy it is proper they should be slow, or solemn, or languishing, they ought for the most part run

somewhat rambling and irregular, and often rapid and subsultory, so as to imitate the natural cadence and quick turns of conversation.

Shakespeare, who, I will venture to say, had the most musical ear of all the English poets, is abundantly irregular in his versification: but his wildest licences seldom hurt the ear; on the contrary, they give his verse a spirit and variety, which prevents its ever cloying. Our modern tragedy-writers, instead of using the advantages of their own language, seem in general to imitate the monotony of the French versification: and the only licence they ever venture upon is that poor tame one the supernumerary syllable at the end of a line; which they are apt to manage in such a manner as to give their verse a most ungrateful halt. But it is not want of ear alone which makes our common manufacturers of tragedy so insipidly solemn and so void of harmony: it is want of feeling. For let the ear be what it will, if the passions are warmly felt, they will naturally express themselves in their proper tones.

Tragedy requires a greater variety of numbers than any other poetical production, as it is the most agitated with different passions. The march of every poem of any considerable length, but

chiefly of tragedy, ought to resemble the course of a river, through a large extent of country, diversified with plains, hills, and mountains. The stream, according as the ground lies through which it flows, is either slow, smooth, and solemn; or brisk and sportful; or rapid, impetuous, and precipitate. Such and so various ought to be the verification of tragedy, instead of that stiff affected importance of movement, which is now absurdly and awkwardly supported through the whole course of these sublime performances.

But beside this studied dignity; this inflexible gravity of pace; this unvaried exactness of measure without spirit or harmony; this immoveable hardness and want of fluctuation in the lines; there is no language so unnatural as that you meet with in the most of our modern tragedies. The characters they represent are too heroic, it would seem, and too much exalted above common life to speak *after the manner of men*. The misfortune is, most of our tragedy-writers labour with all their might, and keep themselves perpetually upon the rack, to say every thing poetically: for it never enters into their head, that the most natural is the most and the only poetical way of saying common things; except sometimes where you can properly raise your expression by an easy metaphor. Let

the sentiments be such as best suit the character and situation, and they cannot be expressed with too much plainness and simplicity; provided all vulgarisms are as much as possible avoided.

As to the characters; if it was not for a very few exceptions, one would think the art of drawing them was lost amongst our dramatic writers. Those that appear in most of our modern plays, tragedies call them or comedies, are like bad portraits, which indeed represent the human features, but without life or meaning, or those distinguishing strokes which, in the incomparable Hogarth, and in every great history-painter, make you imagine you have seen such persons as appear in the picture. In short, those mechanical performances are as imperfect as unnatural representations of human life, of the manners and passions of mankind, as the Gothic knights which lie along in armour in the temple church are of the human figure.

Of IMITATION.

THE humble vanity, as one may call it, of imitating another person's manner, is one great source of affectation; which is generally ridicu-

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lous, and always disagreeable. A person whose natural turn is genteel, if he keeps good company, will insensibly acquire as much of their manner as becomes him; but if he sets up any one as a pattern to be exactly imitated, his behaviour will grow constrained, stiff, and affected. Such will be the constant success of so absurd an attempt to confine the variety of nature; which plainly intends that mankind should be distinguishable one from another by their air, voice, and manner, no less than by their faces.

A poet, a painter, or a player, that imitates closely will never excell; and this will hold good in every thing else that belongs to genius. It is true, that education and study are necessary to the improvement of genius; but to this purpose it is sufficient to be familiarly acquainted with the greatest masters, and the earlier in life the better. By this means, if you delight in them, and have any similarity with them, you will catch their graces without affecting it; and your own original characteristic manner will still distinguish itself. But if you study to form yourself upon them, you become only a copy of a copy. The greatest of them excell by their happy skill in copying nature: and if you content yourself with servilely copying them, without drawing immediately from the common

subject, *nature*; you will always be inferior to your original, and have no chance ever to produce any thing great or striking.

In the mean time I do not imagine that true genius was ever much hurt by imitating. For tho' it is natural for young people to imitate a favourite author at first, it is not probable that true genius will submit to be so fettered long.

Of Writing to the TASTE of the Age.

WHATEVER some have pretended, one may reasonably enough doubt whether ever an author wrote much below himself from any cause but the necessity of writing too fast. When this happens to a writer who, with the advantages of leisure and easy circumstances, is capable of producing such works as might charm succeeding ages, it is a disgrace to the nation and the times wherein such a genius had the misfortune to appear.

It belongs to true genius to indulge its own humour; to give a loose to its own sallies; and to be curbed, restrained, and directed by that sound judgment alone which necessarily attends it. It belongs to it to improve and correct the public

taste ; not to humour or meanly prostitute itself to the gross or low taste which it finds. And you may depend upon it, that whatever author labours to accommodate himself to the taste of his age — suppose it, if you please, this present age — the sickly wane, the impotent decline of the eighteenth century ; which, from a hopeful boy, became a most insignificant man ; and, for any thing that appears at present, will die a very fat drowsy blockhead, and be damned to eternal infamy and contempt : every such author, I say, though he may thrive as far as an author can in the present age, will by degrees languish into obscurity in the next. For, though naked and bare-faced vanity ; though an active exertion of little arts, and the most unremitting perseverance in them ; though party, cabal, and intrigue ; though accidental advantages, and even whimsical circumstances ; may conspire to make a very moderate genius the idol of the implicit multitude : works that lean upon such fickle props, that stand upon such a false foundation, will not be long able to support themselves against the injuries of time. Such buildings begin to totter almost as soon as their scaffolding is taken down.

But if you find it necessary to comply with the humour of your age ; the writing best calculated to

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please a false taste is what has something of the air of good writing, without being really so. For to the vulgar eye the specious is more striking than the genuine. The best writing is often too plain, too simple, too unaffected, and too delicate to stir the callous organs of the generality of critics, who see nothing but the tawdry glare of tinsel, and are deaf to every thing but what is shockingly noisy to a true ear. They are struck with the fierce glaring colours of old Frank; with attitudes and expressions violent, distorted, and unnatural: while the true, just and easy, the graceful, the moving, the sublime representations of Raphael have not the least power to attract them. The bullying, noisy march in Judas Macchabeus has perhaps more sincere admirers than that most pathetic one in Saul: and in conversation pertness and mere vivacity is more felt by the general run of company than easy unaffected wit; as flashy, bouncing, flatulent cyder seems to promise more spirit than the still vigour of reserved Madeira.

But the easiest, as well as the most effectual way of writing to the bad taste of your age, is to set out while your genius is yet upon a level with it. Accordingly, if you have a son who begins to display a hopeful bloom of imagination, be sure to publish, with all the advantages that can be pro-

cured, the very first essays of his genius. They will hardly be too good to please; and besides, they have a chance to be received with particular favour and admiration as the productions of a young muse. When he has thus taken possession of the public ear, he may venture, as his genius ripens, to do his best; he may write as well as he can, perhaps without much danger of sinking in reputation. The renown of his first crude essays will be sufficient to prejudice the mobility, great and small, in favour of the most exquisite pieces he can produce afterwards. But if he must live by his wit, the best thing you can do for him is to transplant him, as early as possible, to Paris; where, in the worst of days, in the most Gothic muse-detesting reign, there is still some shelter afforded to the most delicate as well as the most uncommon flower that blossoms in the human mind. In that gay serene and genial climate the muses are still more or less cultivated, though not with the same ardour and passion in every age; as appears from the following passage translated from a French author*, who wrote about the beginning of the present century. ‘Almost all the arts have in their turns experienced that disgust and love of change which is natural to mankind. But I do not

* *Défense de la poésie*; par M. l'Abbe Messieu. *Mémoires de Littérature*, Tome 2de.

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‘ know that any one of them has felt it more than
‘ poetry ; which, in some ages, has been exalted
‘ to a triumphal height, in others neglected, dis-
‘ couraged, and despised. About sixty years ago,
‘ under one of the greatest geniusses that ever
‘ France produced, poetry found itself amongst
‘ us at its highest pitch of glory. Those who cul-
‘ tivated the muses were regarded with particular
‘ favour : this art was the road to fortune and
‘ dignified stations. But in these days this ardour
‘ seems to be considerably abated. We do not
‘ appear to be extremely sensible to poetical me-
‘ rit,’ etc.

Of PHYSIOGNOMY, *or the* SIMILI- TUDE *between the* PERSON *and the* MIND.

THAT the face is a false glass is a vulgar er-
ror, and seems to have taken its rise from a few
exceptions : for, all mankind are so much physiog-
nomists, that whoever happens to find himself mi-
staken, though but for once, joins the cry of the
proverb. All are not alike skilled in faces, any
more than in unravelling of characters ; even the

most penetrating eye may be mistaken : yet I will presume to say, that the face is seldom a false glass; and when it proves so, it is generally the fault of the beholder. Perhaps indeed nature has made some cheats, some to appear worse, many much better than they are. This is of a piece with her usual variety, and was perhaps partly intended to check the presumption of mankind in judging too rashly of one another. Yet still the face is not a false glass. On the contrary, where the qualities of the mind are eminent, it generally shews them. For the features of the mind commonly follow those of the face; as the figure of most animals, whose characters are strong, is expressive of their nature. Though you had never heard of a lion, a tiger, a serpent, or an alligator, it is natural to think you would at first sight be afraid of them rather than of a hare, or even a horse, whose appearance might prove formidable, but more from his size than his make.

The mind is for the most part visible in the person. Thus, a bearish figure is almost certainly the rind or husk of a rude rough soul, never to be polished by any cultivation. If you find any sweetness in the kernel of such a rugged shell, it is more than you ought to expect; for a man is one thing, and a chestnut another. The voice too

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is in general harsh or sweet, conformably to the features ; and where faces resemble one another, you will meet with a remarkable similitude in the voice.

Sense and virtue are often to be found under a plain face and clumsy figure ; but elegance and delicacy of mind generally appear in the person. Where a false and specious elegance appears in the face, you may expect the same in the mind ; and the herd of mankind will admire them more than the true. Sometimes you meet with a delicate and elegant mind under a face that cannot properly be called handsome : but then you may generally observe a spirit and expression in such a face that pleases a true eye much more than mere regular beauty ; for the best part of beauty is air, meaning, and expression.

The ancient Greeks, besides their being the most ingenious and elegant, were the most beautiful race of mortals that ever appeared in the world. The modern Greeks preserve the mould of their ancestors ; and, if they were blest with liberty, would probably in a short time exceed all their neighbours in every excellence that human nature can boast of, whether ornamental or solid. Exquisite organs are, I believe, for the most part, beautiful too ;

and it is better to have a handsome ear than a very large one. Though the latter is by the laws of the animal œconomy more favourably contrived for the over-hearing of a whisper.

It is a common observation, that the painter constantly draws the finest hands whose own is of an elegant make. This is usually ascribed to a cause which is perhaps more obvious and plausible than true : for a painter often draws a hand in attitudes in which he never sees his own. It was probably more owing to something within themselves, than to the different styles of nature to which they were accustomed, that Rubens and Raphael are so different in their ideas of beauty and their representations of the human form. Vandyke studied under Rubens ; and, as he lived in the same country, was accustomed to the same kind of objects with his master : yet their works are as different as their persons ; the one robust, but rather clumsy ; the other handsome and genteel. In short, the productions of the genius seem to be a kind of propagation, and bear a family resemblance to the parent.

*Of PREJUDICES, political, religious,
or national.*

THIS ungenerous spirit, these ill-natured humours are so extremely absurd, that if strong instances of them were not seen every day, it would be impossible for a man of sense to believe them. For my own part, if I am totally free from any of the common weakness of mankind, I take it to be from this. What is it to me what a man's principles are as to religion or government: He has perhaps as good a right as I, perhaps a better, to keep steady to the principles in which he was educated. My religion may, for want of early instruction, appear as strange to him as his can to me. These things are all merely accidental and the effect of education: for a hot-headed churchman, bred at any protestant university, or the fourest Christian that ever dissented from the orthodox church of England, would have been as violent a Mahometan, if he had received his system of religion from the Mufti at Constantinople. Can it be supposed, that heaven put itself at the head of any religious party! — I humbly think it appears plain enough, that the Almighty, who

displays such infinite variety in all his works, no more intended that all mankind should be of the same religion, than that they should all be of one colour, speak the same language, observe the same customs, and wear the same dress: and it is not less reasonable than charitable to believe, that the virtuous of all religions are equally acceptable to the universal Father. For little as we know of heaven, I hope we may, without any blasphemy, presume that the superior powers are at least as reasonable as the best of us.

It is still not quite out of nature, for people in certain humours, whether from the wine or the weather, to grow sour to one another for matters of mere opinion, nay, and proceed to downright quarrelling, either for the glory of God, or their own vanity. But the utmost effort of narrow-thinking, and what appears perfectly astonishing, is the aversion which some people bear in their minds to all those who do not happen to be born on the same spot, in the same little island, or the same corner of an island with themselves. Good God! would you have all the world to have been born in Ireland? In the name of every thing that is whimsical, what does it signify where a man was born? Can it be either a merit or a crime to have been born in any particular spot of this globe,

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were it in St. Giles's, the Old-Bailey, or even within the execrable walls of Newgate itself? One would think they must be at a prodigious loss for something to value themselves upon who are proud of the place of their birth. Most people pretend to laugh at what is called family pride: and yet, though according to nice herald-like ceremony, the son, as the better gentleman, ought to take the wall of the father; this kind of pride is perhaps not quite a proper object of ridicule: for whoever esteems himself upon account of his ancestry, must of course emulate their virtues, and be afraid to violate their memory by any action unworthy of them. It is needless, and might be mistaken for flattery, to produce the many shining examples of this generous emulation which adorn the present age. Even without any very distinguishing merit of his own, the son has often some claim to a favourable reception for the sake of his father. But he stands upon a very bleak situation who has nothing to shelter him from contempt but the name of his country. For heaven's sake what country is it the most honourable to have been born in? What climate? what latitude?—Under the equator? Or at what particular distance from it? I hope it is not in those climates where the weather is the finest, and the seasons the most agreeable. But is there a country, at least in Chri-

stendom, where the generality of the people, rough as they run, are not as stupid and as wicked as the arch enemy of mankind would wish to make them? The great bulk of the Irish,—I am sorry to say,—are bad enough, very ragged cattle indeed; it is in vain to deny it.—The general run of the Scotch, as well as of the French, Spaniards, and Italians, is so very, so extremely little better, that it might puzzle the most sagacious connoisseur to pronounce which is worst.—The English, though for every kind of merit, as estimable a people as any in Europe, are, with regard to many of their individuals, just as unhappy as the rest. God preserve us, what strange animals, what shabby Christians have had the honour to be born in the metropolis of Great Britain!—of reputable, most reputable parents too!—in this very London! and not to talk of Ragfair, or Drury-lane, in the superb neighbourhood of Grosvenor-square and St. James's itself.

But the merit or value stamped upon any animal from the meridian of its nativity, is not more fantastical than that which it receives from the place of its education. Yet there are thousands who dream, that no science is to be learnt but within those very walls, whence, after many years residence, themselves had come into the world with

a moderate enough share of erudition. It would be highly unreasonable to reflect upon any school because a great number of dunces happened to have been bred there : but people of this narrow way of thinking are really a reproach to their tutors. One would be sorry to see any illiberal jealousy rise among our universities for such a simple dispute (a yet *tetrior quam teterrima belli causa*) as which of them has sent out the most numerous herd of learned blockheads. For any blockhead, whose genius leads him to much poring over heavy volumes, may become a man of great learning in the most illiterate ground, in the most unconsecrated you can name. But for their own sakes it is to be hoped, that these learned bodies will agree to suppress all animosities of this nature ; lest in the course of their altercations it should be discovered, that all those seminaries of learning, however dignified with the specious titles of academies, colleges, or universities, are mere artful impositions upon the ignorance of mankind. For there are many instances to prove with what small helps from education good native parts may shine : and a man may turn out a very considerable blockhead without ever having been taught metaphysics.

As the most hopeful antidote to the poison of this very domestic education, one would prescribe

a visit to foreign parts. And if after a ramble through Europe, the obstinate malignity should still shew itself in fresh eruptions, it would be worth while to try a seven years residence in America: if the patient returns before he is thoroughly cured, I can see no good reason why he should not be transplanted for life.

But a strong obstacle to the cure of this folly, is the advantage which some honest people find in fomenting it. For the mob, I mean the great bulk of mankind; in judging of men, are mere botanists: they distinguish them only by their outward types; the class or tribe they belong to. For want of being able to penetrate a little deeper into the character, they prefer a man for the cock of his hat, or the healths he toasts; and are the more obstinate in their attachment to him, the less reason they can have for it. As the votaries of any religion are the more zealous and violent, the further its principles are removed from common sense.

To conclude, as we begun, with religion. It is nothing to me in whom or in what any man believes. I have no objection in the world to an honest man, because he believes in Mahomet, as long as he gives himself no impertinent trouble about

my faith. Nay, I could live upon good terms with a deist; provided he keeps within the bounds of decency, and does not carry with him through life that juvenile vanity, which will not suffer him to be quiet, till he has told all the world that he laughs at those things which they consider as the most sacred and inviolable.

Of MORAL ATTRACTION and REPULSION.

*Oderunt hilarem tristes, tristemque jocosum,
Sedatum celeres, agilem gnavumque remissi.*

HORAT.

*The sullen hate the gay, the gay the sad;
The slow the active, and the quick the staid.*

THIS was observed by one who knew mankind as thoroughly as most writers. And it is an observation may justly be extended to all people of opposite dispositions. For every knave naturally hates an honest man; and the dimmest most misty blockhead has penetration enough, except you

would rather call it instinct, to discover a man of parts ; and cold virulence enough to detest him. The miser abhors the man who generously enjoys his fortune ; and hopes to see the prodigal starve. As this is the case, it would require some skill in the doctrine of chances to calculate how many enemies a man of sense and integrity is likely to have for one friend.

On the other hand, people of similar characters are apt to like one another. There is not a genuine ruffian in Turkey, not even in Christendom, so abandoned to all sense of humanity, so void of all sympathy with the human kind, that would not take some little pains at least to favour the escape of the wretch who had just murdered his father. Upon these two principles of aversion and attachment, if they are not rather, in the present view, one and the same, it is probable that the most important of human affairs sometimes depend. It is perhaps more owing to this than any single cause besides, that one age is so different from another. For a very few individuals in a nation may have influence enough to throw the great weight of its business into such hands as shall render it either glorious or contemptible, either miserable or prosperous.

But it is now full time to conclude : for when the writer is tired, it is highly probable the reader must begin to yawn, if he is not fast asleep already. For which reasons, what I had farther to say shall be dispatched in as few words as possible, and without a very scrupulous regard to method or regularity.

SENTENCES.

THE sententious manner of writing is apt to be dry, and to give disgust by its oracular air and a dogmatical over-bearing pretension to wisdom. Perhaps it would be better, if its severity was alleviated with a comfortable mixture of human nonsense. For to be perpetually wise, is forbidding, unsocial, and something that does not become human nature, as it does not belong to it. Why should a school-master, a parson, or an apothecary, affect to be as solemn and sublime the whole year round, as if he was a seraph or an archangel come to *dwell amongst us*?

The world has been shamefully imposed upon by many an important fool : but no man of sense ever took any pains to appear wise ; as no

honest man ever used any tricks to display his own integrity.

Most fools, and many sensible people, are conceited : but people of the best sense never are so.

Affectation labours with a diligence that fatigues every spectator, but with infallible success, to defeat its own purpose ; for instead of creating love or admiration, it provokes our aversion and contempt. The most amiable people are always the least affected. Let us make the best of what nature has done for us : she may be improved, but all attempts to alter her from her original shape will only expose us to ridicule. That awkward beast the dromedary, as long as he has any sense, will never pretend to be a Bajazet or an Othello.

I have heard of a poor gentleman who used to be grievously tormented with violent fits of the head-ach, because a celebrated poet was subject to that complaint. Such a head-ach, I suppose, as Jupiter felt just before he was delivered of Pal- las by the rough midwifery of Vulcan's hammer ; which seems to give a broad hint towards the cure of this kind of Cephalagia, as the learned doctors delight to call it.

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Affectation is the bane of every thing. An honest, plain, downright blockhead, supposing him at the same time good-natured, may not only be an useful but an agreeable creature. But when a blockhead is seized with the whim of being a fine gentleman, or a wit, the Lord have mercy upon him—and us.

I am not offended at the insipidity of Mr. Fitz Dotterell's observation, nor even at its impertinence, because I know he meant me no harm: what provokes me, is that he calls it a joke.

A fellow who, without a grain of wit or humour will always be a joking, is not only a disagreeable and contemptible companion, but a dangerous one. For his aukward, unwary nonsense will be apt, one time or other, to make him stumble into a quarrel; and he may lose his friend, or perhaps his life, without the satisfaction to say he had a good joke for it.

T'other bottle won't do——No, nor the other hog'shead neither——You great pale-eyed logger-head, you must have patience——You must wait a good while before you rouse Mr. Truewit's mettle——A long time, indeed!——You must wait till your own wit begins to sparkle——I am afraid

you must wait till you're gone. There is a secret power in your presence, enough to check every thing that's genial — You are worse than a fog or the east wind. — The candles burn dim while you're here — and the burgundy drinks as flat as port. Good night. Here's to your good repose. May you sleep like any porpus ! — But hark'ye, gook Mr. Van Numb, before you go — You can't live without wit it seems — Bless your fat head ! are you sure that you know wit when you hear it ? — Let me be curst if you do, even when you pore over it in print at the rate of an octavo page in an hour.

It is illiberal, inhuman, and unreasonable in the highest degree to insult any man for his being dull : but when dulness pretends to genius or parts, it becomes a fair object of ridicule.

True satire may be called the rage of probity, and even of good-nature. It is the indignation of virtue and wit against vice, ill-nature, and affectation.

From satire to metaphysics is a desperate stride, yet we will venture it rather than defer our opinion of this science to any future occasion. We take metaphysics, in the degree to which they are car-

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ried by certain philosophers, to be *the art of talking grave nonsense upon subjects that lie beyond the reach of the human understanding*. Better talk about the weather still, or blunder through the mist of politics; or retail those insipid daily lies we call news.

I have seen people, that were no fools, laugh at the wrong place, and without being tickled, that they might not appear dull at taking a joke. What is worse, I have known people, who were not quite fools neither, affect to be angry without feeling any affront; because they would not be thought to want apprehension or spirit.

Vanity, besides the secret pleasure it gives one's self, is a very thriving quality; and it is not politic to be at any pains to disguise it, except among people of the best sense. For the generality of the world will have the same opinion of you that you seem to have of yourself.

False or middling genius is almost always arrogant and vain. The true may be provoked to do itself justice; but is seldom apt to undervalue itself.

Though vanity and pride are very different

things, we may talk here of that kind of pride which hurts your inferiors, and keeps those at a distance who are never likely to abuse your familiarity. It seems to be the consciousness of little minds, who are afraid of being seen too near. It is to be proud only where you may, with the utmost safety, be so ; for those proud people are almost always mean and servile to such as rank above themselves.

Now, that we are talking of unreasonable animals ; there is a waspish fellow who must discharge his venom where he dares, and every day uses you like a dog — because he's your cousin truly, and may be free with you. When the wind is easterly, this cousin becomes absolutely intolerable. Perhaps, after all, he intends you no great mischief in the main. But, in my opinion, the best way to manage such a cousin is to give him a most inhuman threshing. He'll bounce, and fling, and raise a cursed outcry ; but don't spare him : for, with heaven's blessing it will do him an infinite deal of good ; and make him as civil, till he begins to forget it, as the politest enemy you ever had the happiness to converse with. Besides, you will find a sublime pleasure in the exercise of a just vengeance — By all that's imperial, it is a luxury almost too high for a subject !

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Superstitious people are always the most ostentatious. I suppose you may remember that you used to be the fondest and most vain of the thing you were but just beginning to learn.

Many shallow people make their fortunes by the mere force of gossiping. With some it passes for knowledge of the world; whereas it is only practising an art which, though insuperably tedious and insipid to men of a different turn, instead of costing them any trouble, is their native element; for they were born gossips.

The blunt sword is the trusty weapon. And there is nothing so infallibly successful in all trades and professions as the parts of a blockhead; plodding, selfishness, cunning, and impudence: which last virtue may be reckoned the chief of these cardinal ones; for,

Nullum numen abest si sit Impudentia.

The ambition of a man of parts is often disappointed by the want of some common quality, with whose assistance very moderate abilities are capable of making a great figure.

Some people have just parts enough to do their country a great deal of mischief: for if their

understanding was the smallest degree lower, it would be too glaringly ridiculous to employ them.

Some have died upon the scaffold for their faithful services to their ungrateful country. You remember the shocking catastrophe of these great and good men, the De Wits. — By all that's stern and horrible ! by the black-hung room ! by the blood-thirsty saw-dust ! you're in the right — The surest way to avoid ingratitude, is never to do one good thing while you live.

Many excellent geniusses have been lost. But we ought not to repine too much at this seeming inattention of providence to human affairs ; as from the same cause perhaps a much greater number of shocking monsters have been smothered and suppressed. For I am afraid there are more Neroes and Caracallas than Tituses or Trajans in private life, who want nothing but to be emperors to shew themselves. Immortal Gods ! how many thousand Claudiuses *are at this hour asleep* between Hyde-Park Corner and Wapping !

I am afraid it is easier to corrupt good natural dispositions by education and habit than to subdue bad ones.

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There are people that were born liars ; who tell you every day very seriously a parcel of insipid unmeaning lies, and probably believe them. It is a mere odd kind of weakness in them ; they cannot help it ; perhaps they are not sensible of it. Nay, I don't know whether there is not such an absurd creature as a thief that has little more scheme or meaning than a pilfering jackdaw.

Though there are strange inconsistent mixtures in human nature, there never yet was a fine understanding where the heart was bad.

There is a parcel of crazy worthless people who set up for wits, and bring the name of poet under a kind of disgrace with those who do not know that there can be no true genius without a sound understanding and an honest heart.

Some of those people do more indiscreet, irrational, absurd things than even nature prompts them to : some become sots, and affect every thing that is indecent and shocking, merely that they may pass, good God ! for men of genius ; and they are admired as such by the majority of their acquaintance for no other reason.

Oddities and singularities of behaviour may at-

tend genius; when they do, they are its misfortunes, and its blemishes. The men of true genius will be ashamed of them: at least he will never affect to distinguish himself by whimsical particularities.

In short, good sense is the solid foundation of all genius, and of every thing that is truly ornamental. It is necessary, in some degree, even to a good fidler: still more so to one who composes music. A blockhead, drunk with mortal port, might have drawled out such a pitiful strain as *God save our noble King*; — or, *To Arms*, and *Britons Strike Home*; but he must have had taste and genius who composed *Joy to great Caesar*, or even *The Early Horn*.

Except Handel's oratorio one seldom goes to a musical entertainment where the great bulk of the pieces is not insipid. They have plenty of good music, but the performers are most provokingly frugal of the best. The reason I plainly take to be this: almost every scraper upon the violin has perhaps composed more or less music himself; and, instead of the works of the great masters, they entertain you with their own. If reading was a public entertainment; if authors were the only readers, and the choice were left to them, I suppose

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the great writers of former ages would soon be forgotten.

It is a question with me whether the music of a country is to be performed any more than its language pronounced to perfection, but by those that have been young in it; or what comes nearly to the same thing, have been taught it young by a native of that country.

People of the finest ear very often have not the least turn to mimicry: while, on the contrary, some of the best mimics are mis-tuned, and have not the least ear to harmony.

It is impossible to make such a definition of wit as shall comprehend every kind of it. But it seems to consist chiefly in a happy faculty of comparing distant objects*, and surprising you with the discovery of a striking resemblance where you did not dream of finding any.

The wit of some, who have a large share of it, is too much of one kind, and proves cloying for want of variety.

* In some ingenious essays, which appeared a few years ago in the daily papers, wit was called *a tall faculty of the mind*. There is something odd in the expression, but the meaning is good.

An author who affects to be fine in every thing he says, and to write above his subject, is just as ridiculous a coxcomb, as he who performs the most indifferent actions with a studied grace. And this affectation is one principal cause of the awkward unnatural language, which prevails in most of our modern tragedies.

Mr. Voltaire observes very justly of some authors, that they have done themselves no good by endeavouring to be universal. It is a foolish enough piece of vanity to be sure; for it requires no great genius to write a spiritless ode, an affected epistle, an insipid satire, a flat comedy, a cold tragedy, and even a flimsy, foppish, uninterested epic poem. Shakespear perhaps possessed the greatest compass of genius that ever man did, and could excell in every thing, from the noblest sublime down to the burlesque.

In some ages the few people of genius ought to publish just enough to shew what they could have done in better times: more is not worth their while.

If there wants any thing besides the applause of the best judges to establish the reputation of your performance, it is the dislike of the worst. For

false taste, whatever it may pretend, though it may even impose upon itself, at its heart naturally hates true genius.

I have heard talk of an Italian, who thought the foldier in Vandyke's Belisarius something quite wonderful from a Flemish painter. It would seem he had never heard of one Rubens, a native of Flanders, who, *take him for all in all*, weigh him in the nicest balance, is perhaps hardly inferior to any painter that Italy has produced. True taste is always candid, and naturally delights in true genius, without ever enquiring from what soil it sprung.

I have been told, that some French Abbe, whose name I forget, pronounces, with a very decisive air, that Shakespear understood all the passions but *love*.— Good God !— Shakespear not understand *love* !— Who does then ?— Voltaire ?

Love, anger, grief, all the passions are contagious.

Love is the cause of more indiscretions in old people perhaps than in young.

Dr. Swift says, that no wise man ever wished

himself younger. The dean might perhaps have excepted a man renowned for wisdom, who seems to have been gloomy and unhappy in his latter years merely from want of youth.

Died by the sting of a snail would sound oddly in the bills of mortality. Yet I have known a woman of beauty, sense, and spirit, in love with one of the most insipid fellows that ever glared weary stupidity from a large dead eye. Whence it appears, that the infatuation of queen *MAB* in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, however extravagant it seems, is not quite out of nature.

As there have been many *small* observations made upon *great* classics, I must take the liberty to venture one. Iago ends his description of a good woman with

She was a wight, if ever such there were —

Here he stops, and Desdemona asks, *To do what?* It does not appear what leads her to this question, except you add a little word, which seems to have dropt out of its place here without being missed.— Suppose it was to be read thus :

*She was a wight, if ever such there were,
To ———*

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Here the buffoon pauses, to draw the lady into the question, which it is now natural for her to make; and to give, what he is ready to add, its full effect of surprising and disappointing a chly.

*She that was ever fair, and never proud,
Had wit at will, and yet was never loud, &c.*

She was a wight, if ever such there were,

To ———

To do what? ———

To suckle fools, and chronicle small-beer.

Why do the players, in the part of Richard the third, always say, *Give me a horse*. It not only sounds much better, but the meaning is, in my opinion, more warm and spirited as it stands in Shakespear.

Give me another horse.— Bind up my wounds—

As I feel it, there is a kind of tame impropriety, or even absurdity, in that action of Hamlet producing the two miniatures of his father and uncle out of his pocket. It seems more natural to suppose, that Hamlet was struck with the comparison he makes between the two brothers, upon casting his eyes on their pictures, as they hang up in the apartment where this conference passes with the queen. There is not only more elegance, and

dignity in supposing it thus ; but it gives occasion to more passionate and more graceful action, and is of consequence likelier to be as Shakespear's imagination had conceived it.

I beg pardon for these trifles ; and, in hopes that you may not all be so ill-natured as to take me at my word, shall conclude with a scrap of Latin, that has, like many others, led a weary life, tho' it is almost as insipid a thing of the kind as ever came upon the town —

Nos hac novimus esse nihil.

Which, in plain English, means no more than that, *I am sensible all these SKETCHES and SENTENCES are mere Nothing.*

T H E E N D.

S K E T C H E S:
 O R
 E S S A Y S
 O N
 V A R I O U S S U B J E C T S.
 P A R T S E C O N D.
 O F B U S I N E S S.

I SHOULD take the most natural and agreeable life to consist in a well-proportioned mixture of business, amusement, and pleasure. A life of mere dissipation and pleasure must be exposed to many weary, tedious, insipid hours; and haunted with reflections mortifying to an ingenuous mind. A little business is necessary to keep off the languor which attends idleness, and to prepare you for enjoying the hours of indulgence with a proper quickness of appetite. Unhappy the man who is obliged to live by the business to which he

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has taken an aversion: though perhaps not more miserable than some independent people, who, having nothing to do, have neither taste nor genius to fill up their time agreeably.

A keen turn to amusement and to the common drudging business of the world, I believe seldom meet in the same person. A strong disposition to selfish industry, obtuse sensations, (which are seldom unattended with a proper share of confidence) and a moderate degree of discretion and judgment, are sufficient, with the help of a very slight education, to qualify almost any man to succeed in any business. And it is evident, from numberless instances, that a man may arrive at the highest station in some of the most ingenious professions, by just the same kind of talents and arts as make an eminent taylor or a stay-maker.

OF LUCK.

THAT sensible, or at least that plausible, old saying, *Quisquis suæ fortunæ faber est*, which in plain English means that *every man is the carpenter or bricklayer of his own fortune*, is not to be admitted without a great many exceptions; for

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luck, good or bad, will every now and then be meddling, in what regards the prosperity of such reptiles, such *vile worms*, as some humble philosophers are pleased to reckon the race of human kind.

Fortuna favet fortibus—fortune favours the brave, says another. A third says, *Fortuna favet fatuis*—fortune favours fools. This last observation seems to have more examples in its favour than both the other two. For fools and weak people, they say, are generally remarkable for good luck. But though fortune interferes ever so evidently in their favour, few of them have the generosity or gratitude to own it; ascribing, or what ought rather to be called imputing, their success entirely to their own superior merit.

OF LARGE SOCIETIES.

WHEN a great number of weak heads and bad hearts are collected into a mass, they must naturally improve in vice and folly; and very fast too, if they are not kept in order by a wise discipline. It was probably from this consideration amongst others, that in former times, a prince, celebrated

for wisdom, thought it an object of the utmost consequence to a whole kingdom, to put a stop at once to the further growth of its capital. In a very populous and over-grown city, especially if it happens to be the seat of an extensive commerce, great multitudes of people, without either education or good natural sense, must grow rich. These, in all popular dissensions, will generally throw their weight into the wrong scale; will join the clamour against the most salutary measures; raving for things unreasonable, impracticable, and what, with better eyes, they would often see detrimental and pernicious to themselves. Yet such heads as these lead the rest of the nation, who consider them as their true and incorrupted source of political intelligence; their vigilant guardians, their safe protectors; the soundest, ablest, and most disinterested judges of whatever belongs to the management of national affairs.—God knows to what a contemptible degree they are mistaken! —For there is nothing more true, than that the inhabitants of a certain metropolis are, in general, not only the most brutal, indecent, and immoral, but the most stupid and ignorant, of the whole people throughout the kingdom.

Oh!—to any one who feels for the honour and dignity of England, what a subject of shame

and mortification it must be, that the bad manners of those, who inhabit the capital, expose the whole nation to the contempt of all foreigners!—Oh! good God! to the contempt of all Europe; who must naturally form an unjust opinion of the more civilized and more sensible people in all the most distant corners of the kingdom, from what passes *here*. Where the master of the house is a clown, the whole family partakes in his disgrace; and is even apt to be affected by him. Pray don't call the people of this Town *Englishmen*—For the honour of *England*, call them *Londoners* for ever—The yesty dregs of Great-Britain and Ireland, the frothy scum of every nation in Europe, of every province in America, fermenting with the * *Gowk spittle* of Jamaica, is their composition. Such *Englishmen* as these *Londoners*—good heaven!—are the only real enemies of *England*; which never can be ruined, but by their stupidity, their absurdity, their madness and villainy.—In this blessed meridian of LIBERTY, the French protestants too; whose fathers, within the memory of some that are yet alive, fled hither for shelter from an inhuman persecution; are become, of a most

* This is the name by which the country people in Scotland call the white frothy substance, the nest, in which the gnats eggs are hatched amongst the branches of the sorrel and other plants.—*Gowk* is their common word for the Cuckoo.

humble colony of suppliants, a gang of profligate ruffians, that madly and ungratefully rebel against a government, to which they owed their protection then, and do to this day. In their own original country, the wheel, instead of the gallows, would long ago have put an end to *their* turbulence.

VOX POPULI VOX DEI.

THIS sentence must have been first roared out by an impudent leader of some villainous faction: and it is supprising that even the implicit indolence of sensible people should, to this day, have permitted it to pass without the least examination.—What?—*The cry of the stupid, ignorant, profane populace, who constitute the great majority of mankind, the voice of God!*—Heaven preserve us!—But this horrible blasphemy has been so long familiar to our ears, that we hear it without shuddering, and even acquiesce in it. If those blind gentry are ever in the right, it must be by chance, and they have only stumbled upon it. The tools of knaves must always be in the wrong; and even when left to themselves, the multitude hardly ever fail to be mistaken.

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For instance, of all those who have, in almost every various denomination, from time to time, become favourites with the vulgar here, great and small, within this present century, how few will be remembered in the next, except with contempt and infamy!—Of those idols, from the most exalted stations downward to the meanest; from the monarch's palace down to the tradesman's kitchen, how few have not already survived their false renown, rotted alive, and discovered their deformities naked enough to be perceived by the blindest populace that ever disgraced human nature! who at the same time, are never, by any experience, any disappointments, or the most flagrant discoveries, to be cured of their natural propensity to this absurd and fatal idolatry. This stupid idolatry is indeed the only religion that now remains to them. Yet, void as they are both of religion and morals, any cunning impudent knave might so operate upon their stupidity and ignorance, as to throw them all into a holy ferment again, by screaming out that *the church is in danger*.

OF THE PRESS.

THE liberty of the press is gone, was not long ago wantonly bawled out every night and morn-

ing from the lurking holes of Grubstreet, from the Fleet, the King's-bench, the Marshalsea, and perhaps from Newgate itself, by a parcel of factious scribblers; who, at the same time, were weekly and daily flinging about such indecent abuse, and such impudent pernicious lies, as no wise government, except the present, in any country, or in any age, would, for its own dignity, or the peace, harmony, and happiness of society, have suffered. That the liberty of the press is gone, was, indeed, too true, at the time when this impudent disingenuous complaint was the most clamorous—But how? and in what sense?—The daily and weekly conveyers of political intelligence, had, for a long time, almost universally, as I am told, shut up their *channels* to truth and common sense; at least they seldom suffered any thing of that kind to pass. They conveyed nothing almost but impudent lies, nonsense, and villainy; which indeed is too much the case to this day.

I have for a long time, in sad earnest, considered the art of printing as a most pernicious invention. It puts it in the power of every blockhead and scoundrel to propagate stupidity, brutality, bad morals, deceit, and imposture, throughout the land. In short, the present indecency and

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licentiousness of the press, most evidently tends to the abolishing of its liberty; and that of the whole nation.

OF THE POOR.

IN any country, opulent or not, it is a disgrace to government, that any one, who dares to claim its protection, should ever perish for want of necessaries. There ought to be no distress from want. Employ the poor that are able to work; supply the infirm and superannuated with a comfortable subsistence. The greatest miseries of life are often not to be cured, not even to be soothed, by all the advantages of wealth. And what a shameful inhuman crime it is to neglect those to which a wise police could always apply an infallible remedy!

I say again, there ought to be no distress from want. Employ your poor that are able to work.—But we cannot oblige a *free-born Briton* to work, if he is ever so poor—God forbid!—But why?—You can confine this son of freedom in a nasty goal for a trifling debt; you can send him to Tyburn for a pitiful theft; and yet you cannot oblige him to make himself happy, by earning a comfortable

livelihood in the way of honest industry—Very true—for, as a *free Briton*, the poorest man is still his own master.—You mean, he has a right to make himself extremely miserable—But what right has he to recline himself an useless burden upon society? You'll say that society may leave him to starve; as it often does. But what's the good of that? The miserable wretch goes to the dogs; and society loses a hand that might have been of some use.—Pray why do you send your boys to school?—Why, surely to learn to read and write, and qualify themselves for business, in one shape or another.—Would not they rather pass their time in play, d'ye think?—I suppose they would; but their masters won't suffer them to be idle.—Well, those idle fools we talk of are always children; and ought to be submitted to any authority, that kindly obliges them to be busy for their own happiness.

In a neighbouring country, whose plan of police is, perhaps, the most perfect that ever human wisdom contrived, and the best executed; the poorest creature that can work is not suffered to be idle; the poorest creature that cannot work is not left to starve.

A N A N E C D O T E .

I AM naturally fond of strangers; and, where all other circumstances are equal, should find myself disposed to pay them more or less attention in proportion to their distance from home. Where all things else are equal, in performing any little duties of benevolence within my power, I should prefer a German to a Hollander or a Frenchman; a Greek, a Russian, or a Turk, to a German; a Persian to a Turk; and so on to the utmost limits of the East.—Of all the people upon earth, the Asiatics appear to me the most amiable, noble, and generous: they seem the most possessed with that virtuous heroic enthusiasm, which exalts human nature to its highest degree of sublimity. One late well-attested instance of their generous humanity, may perhaps not be too tiresome to the impatient reader. The gentleman is but lately dead who favoured me with the following relation of a fact which deserves to be more generally known; and I give it in his own words:

In the year 1730, the Prince George, captain Cross, from Bengal and Surat to Canton, was drove into Juncum bay, on the coast of China, in

a hard gale of wind ; of such force as to make the supercargoes, Messrs. Stephenson and Harrison, with Mr. Alex. Wedderburn, purser, go ashore in the pinnace, in order to get a pilot, and such other help as their distress then required. The wind all that night blowing fiercer, next morning they were told the ship was lost, which they soon perceived to be too true. The mandarine of that district immediately ordered, that the fore-mentioned gentlemen, with Mr. Barlow, fourth mate, who then acted as coxswain of the pinnace, and the Lascars, should be provided with lodgings and all proper accommodations ; and that every part of the wreck, and all the goods that could be saved, should be carefully gathered together, and put into a secure place for them ; all which was faithfully performed. The generous mandarine's humanity did not end here ; for he ordered a present of 350 tale * to Mr. Stephenson, 300 to Mr. Harrison, 250 to Mr. Wedderburn, 200 to Mr. Barlow, and to each Lascar as much as was reckoned equal to their full wages, had the voyage been performed in the usual time : and, at their departure, gave them an order, from the court of Pekin, for carriages, lodgings, and provisions, through every district in their way to Canton.

* Three tale are equal in value to one pound sterling.

One would be glad to know, upon what Christian shore any ship-wreck'd crew could have met with such humane and generous treatment. What still the more heightens the merit of this noble behaviour, it is well known that the Chinese are not at all fond of trading with the Europeans; and it is probable enough, that some other eastern nations may, in time, become as shy of them, from experience, as the sagacious Chinese have always been from theory and speculation.

As generous deeds do not appear every day, even in the most sensible, the most virtuous, and most magnificent of all possible ages; there is room here to pay some proper respect to a late act of humanity in the present Emperor of Morocco; which the following extract from his letter to the grand Master of Malta will explain :

“ In the name of God, the sole Almighty. To the Prince of Malta, Grand-Master of the Religion of St. John, and to all his Council, the Emperor of Morocco, Fez, Mequinez, etc. wishes health and prosperity. In compassion of several Tuscan slaves, who have long been in my possession, and have never yet been demanded of me, I send them all to be presented to you by my secretary Abladi Salciti: by this means, procuring

myself at once the double satisfaction of making you a present, and of restoring liberty to those unfortunate people. If you had no captives of ours in your possession, I should desire nothing of you in return; but as I know you have, I shall with great pleasure receive such as you may be pleased to send me."

Along with this letter the Emperor sent thirty-seven Christian slaves; and that the Grand-Master of Malta returned exactly the same number of Mahometan captives, must have been owing to his having had no more.

OF FABLE AND HISTORY.

FOR want of intelligence, or candour, or perhaps of both, there is often too great a mixture of fable in history. On the other hand, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that there is more true history amongst the fables of the antient poets than we generally imagine. And to compare the historian with the poet, the latter seems not only the most entertaining, but the most instructive, the most ingenuous, and most honest of the two; as he does not even expect your belief of every great and wonderful event or action he relates.

The mixture of evident undisguised improbabilities, and what the critics I think call the *marvellous* in Homer, has, in too great a measure, weakened his credit as an historian. Though even in this capacity he has, perhaps, shewn himself much superior, in candour and impartiality, to many at least of our modern history-writers. In support of this observation, I can hardly think it necessary to take notice, that he has in general represented more worthy, amiable, and heroic characters, amongst the Trojan heroes, than in those of his own country.

His commentators, I am told, have here and there been struck with some glimpses of true history in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. And indeed I should imagine, that his narration in each of those poems was built upon solid facts; enlivened with fable only to make it the more entertaining and wonderful; and, with the heightening of every ornament, to exalt an history into a poem. One particular circumstance, which I don't know that any of those commentators has observed in this light, seems strongly to favour such a conjecture. The hero of the *Odyssey*, after having, with great bravery and address, demolished the profligate suitors, puts the poor female attendants, who might have been passively concerned in the

riots of his house, upon the shocking office of removing the bodies of their slaughtered lovers: and as soon as they have, by his orders, swabbed the bloody hall, he hangs them all up in a string against the wall of the court. Homer could never have *made* the hero of his poem guilty of such an indecent unmanly piece of cruelty; but found himself obliged, by his attachment to true history, to record it as a real atchievement of the * *hard-hearted Ulysses*.

THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

HISTORY is, in general, an uncomfortable fatiguing journey through a flat insipid country; a tale too long for human patience. And after all, for want of intelligence and candour in the writers of history, you can seldom trust to its veracity. What different accounts are given of events that have happened even in our own times! —For my part, I find myself much disposed to be an infidel as to many disputed points of history. A battle is an *affair* of such confusion, that few, even of those who have been concerned in it, can explain its circumstances, or fairly recollect them. It is sometimes as much as you can do to discover

* *Durus Ulysses*.

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which army gained the victory. But what is yet more surprizing, it has happened, that some very conspicuous characters in history have been so falsely represented, that the most worthless and contemptible continue to be regarded with admiration; while the best and the most amiable are considered with detestation and abhorrence.

A lively spirited relation of a formidable conspiracy, an important revolution, or any other interesting event, may afford a very agreeable entertainment. But human life is too short; and it requires all the phlegmatic patience of a well-fed lawyer, to attend to a long, drawling, insipid story, if it was ever so true.—Livy is far from being a heavy, loitering, dozing story-teller. His subject is enriched with a great variety of entertaining events. Notwithstanding his extravagant profusion of coxcomical ornaments, in very good speeches made by himself for people who never spoke them, he dispatches the affairs of a prodigious empire, throughout a whole century of perpetual action, in much less than half the number of pages that one insignificant reign of a king of France, or of England, has cost to some laborious compilers. And yet, for all the spirit, elegance, and dignity of his narration, perhaps there are not many now alive who have had perseverance enough

to attend the great Latin historian to the end of his tale; even shortened as it is by the injuries of chance and time.

So much for history as an amusement. As to its use toward qualifying a statesman for the management of public affairs, I take it to be very inconsiderable. A general acquaintance with the history of his own country is perhaps enough for a *prime minister*; and some, I am told, have made a tolerable shift to stumble on for many years without even that. With a proper share of sagacity, resolution, activity, and address, an honest statesman might, in the most troublesome times, do great things for his country; though he had never turned over one leaf of either Livy, Tacitus, or Sallust. Mean time, allusions and references to ancient history have long been successfully employed to give some credit, with an air of consequence and dignity, to the delusive lucubrations of your state empirics, and their venal journey-men. And this seems to be the only advantage which our statesmen have ever yet drawn from the study of history.

OF FAME.

THERE is as much variety of taste in this capital article of happiness, as in any thing else. For there are multitudes who would be ashamed of a virtuous renown, and proud of what they would think a glorious villainy. An inhuman, dissolute, abandoned villain, will naturally admire the character of a Tiberius, a Nero, or a Domitian; and perhaps, without much affectation, despise that of a Titus or a Trajan.

If you are not perfectly indifferent as to the good opinion of the mob, you are one of them yourself. *Their* opinion, as far as all politic views are out of the question, is much below the consideration of every man who has any tolerable share of understanding. But he who is above the opinion of the better and more sensible part of mankind; he who does not regard it with the utmost reverence; is most certainly capable of every thing that is base and villainous.

OF REVENGE.

THE gratification of this passion in the hands of a sensible man, a person of moderation and humanity, will hardly ever, in cold blood, exceed the bounds of an exact retaliation. So far I should reckon it just, and a proper supplement to the laws; which afford no redress in many cases of the most insupportable injustice. I could perhaps forgive an act of villainy which is not cognizable by the laws—but I don't chuse it—it is against my principles—it is weak, impolitic, and absurd.—In such cases you have nothing but the fearful apprehensions of your own resentment, to keep rascals in awe.

Every act of just vengeance is a *terror to evil doers*; and contributes somewhat to the safety of honest and inoffensive people:—perhaps it might even to the stability of government; if it should ever become so despicably weak, so tottering and paralytic, as tamely to bear the insults of an abandoned, stupid, cowardly populace.

OF BLASPHEMY.

THERE is a set of vain crazy mortals, I was going to say half-witted fellows, but that would be too great a compliment: fools, that attempt to shine by talking blasphemy.—Good God!—it would be a small triumph to outshine all those geniuses in that stile.—I fear the thunder at least as little as any of those indecent reprobates; but I cannot be so stupidly ungrateful, as to insult the adorable author of my being and all the pleasures of my life. There surely needs very little wit to ridicule the ideal God of the vulgar; who conceive the stupenduous Creator of the universe; the Almighty Spirit, who has produced every thing that is good, great, and beautiful; to be a testy, ill-natured old man, with a long beard.

After all, to give the devil his due; a knave, who is always at bottom a fool, as indeed most of us are, is of all animals the least unpardonable for complaining of his Maker.

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

WHAT we call Evil, as well as every thing that is good, most certainly sprung from the great fountain of all existence. Heaven, which gave us corn, wine, and oil, sent us also war, famine, and pestilence. The most pernicious things have their uses; and the rankest poisons, skilfully managed, prove the most powerful medicines.

In moral life, a perfect character would be a monster; at least I should hardly chuse the society of a man who was above all human weaknesses. The amiable medium of virtue, to the best of my apprehension, lies between a rigid, severe, minute, exact, over-scrupulous sanctity, and a dissolute profligacy. It avoids the one, as disagreeable, uncomfortable, and forbidding; the other, as indecent, shocking, and contemptible.

I humbly conceive, that there cannot be much pleasure in a state that is not, in one shape or another, obnoxious to pain; and that none, but the Almighty himself, can enjoy an uninterrupted and immutable happiness. The heathen elysium has nothing to recommend it but ease and tranquil-

lity; green fields and serene weather; which one would wish sometimes to change for a storm. The happy heroes there are a parcel of mere loungers; insipid murderers of time; or rather, useless trifling wasters of eternity. It is difficult to imagine any thing so tiresome as their condition.—The Mahometan paradise is flattering indeed as to one article of pleasure;—but that is hardly enough—For even love itself may, once in forty or fifty years, sigh for a truce of a few hours; at least for a little variety. Without variety, life is insipid in this world: and the happiest situation in the next may possibly enough be somewhat exposed to disagreeable rubs; that it may not sink into a state of insipid dissipation, or supine inactivity.—You all know what horrible riots and combustions broke out in heaven at the time that old Satan, or his Sulphureous Highness (according to the title with which he has lately been dignified by a pulpit orator) lost his wits, and rebelled against Almighty power.—What squabbles may have happened there since, heaven only knows; as all historical intelligence from thence has been shut up ever since the cessation of inspired writing.

In short, the Christian *Hades*, with a tolerable mixture of variety, would be a more eligible situation, than either the heathen Elysium, or the

Paradise of Mahomet. To fry for ever under the dog-days must be horrible. But with a reasonable variety of cool air, fresh spring-water, iced cream, plenty of good Rhenish, Old-hock, Moselle, Cyder, Burgundy, and some other comfortable things, one might make a tolerable shift *there*: or even in *Jamaica* itself.

But to be very serious; without a certain mixture of what we call Evil, the beautiful and entertaining variety which the almighty Creator exhibits both in the natural and moral world, must have been imperfect. If this mixture was not necessary to the beauty and perfection of nature, it must have been unavoidable. For it is beyond the power of God himself to perform things naturally impossible. There are numberless things, both in the natural and moral world, which no more depend upon the will of God, than that two and two make four; or that a sphere is more capacious than any other figure under the same extent of surface. A proportionable sensibility of pain, must, I suppose, unavoidably attend that of pleasure. God Almighty has given you sense enough to take care of yourself; but, to be perfectly secured from burning or drowning, you must have a world without either fire or water.

To conclude; if *the ways of God to man* needed any *vindication*, why may we not presume that, supposing a mixture of *real* evil to be unavoidable, the Almighty should chuse to admit some evil rather than that there should be no good; to expose his creatures to some chance of pain and misery, rather than that there should be no creation; rather than that infinite space, the scene of his stupenduously magnificent and most beautiful works, should for ever remain waste, empty, and desolate?

OF FASCINATION.

THE language of the eyes is so expressive, as to be understood at the first glance. But the art by which the rattle-snake, and others of the serpent family, can ogle a hare into their formidable jaws, or,

Drink from the midst of heaven the ill-pois'd lark,
might deserve some consideration. Some honest sensible naturalists appear confident of the fact. For my part, though I have not yet seen it, strange as it is, I have no right to say it is impossible.—I can conceive a man in such a state of

mind and circumstances as to find himself tempted to do the very thing that would give him the utmost horror. That most unhappy madman *Caligula*, they say, would often tell *Cæsonia*, of whom he was so passionately fond, *How easily could I strike off this charming head of thine!*

I recollect, upon this occasion, some lines in a poet, who of all mankind had the most intimate acquaintance with human nature—

*What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er its base into the sea—*

*The very place puts Toys of desperation
Without more motive into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.*

If I remember right, *Montagne*, who does not seem to have been of a melancholy complexion, somewhere says, that when he found himself upon the top of some hideous precipice in his mountainous neighbourhood, he had often felt an impulse to leap down. The shocking fate of a young lady; who, according to report, within these two

or three years, while she was observing the dreadful figure of a large shark, slipped out of the cabin-window into the sea, might possibly enough have been owing to some desperate impulse of this kind.

As one would do any thing reasonable to rescue the memory of a great man from unjust reproach; I think it impossible that *Empedocles* could have been so very weak, as by a fly slip out of this world, either to hope or wish to pass for one of the immortal gods.—The hollow surface might have failed him; he might have slipped in by the mere chance of an unlucky step; he might have been suffocated by the sulphureous steam; or, on the brink of the burning gulph, he might naturally enough have grown giddy; or have been seized with such *Toys of desperation* as *Shakespear* talks of.—But neither envy, malice, nor jealousy, have the least acquaintance with generosity or candour.

THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE UPON GENIUS.

THERE are people so bigoted to some particular theory, to false opinions and prejudices, as

indolently to surrender even their own sensations to them. There are in this island some renegadoes absurd enough to tell you, that Britain lies at too great a distance from the sun to produce any genius. It is really paying too much attention to such tasteless, ignorant, superficial connoisseurs, to ask them, what country in Europe, what climate the nearest to the sun, has displayed a richer bloom of genius, in almost any department, than has spontaneously sprung up in this foggy island; without even any kind fostering influences from the superior powers — excepting those alone of heaven and nature. — In what kind of genius is this island inferior to any nation under the sun? — How many geniuses has the happy climate of Italy produced, in any shape, since the days of Augustus? — The genial fruitful latitude of Greece has now lain quite fallow for near two thousand years. Spain should be ashamed to boast of, or even to own her noble, generous, her delightful Cervantes, whom she pitifully suffered to starve. — But what great geniuses has ever the warm climate of Africa produced? from the coast of Barbary to that of Guinea? from the mouth of the Nile to the Cape of Good-Hope?

There are perhaps only two arts in which this island yields to any climate, however near the sun.

It appears that the vainest Romans did not pretend to vie with the Greeks in statuary. Yet, what artists in that way has modern Italy produced superior, or even equal to those of old Rome?—Very few, I believe, and if it was not for Michael Angelo, perhaps one might venture to say none; tho' Italy, I suppose, lies as near the sun as it did eighteen hundred years ago.—If the English have not hitherto excelled in painting, it may be imputed to circumstances that need no explanation. But, notwithstanding all the obstacles to true genius in this island: it has, within these few years, lost a painter of singular excellence; as natural and expressive, I'll venture to say it, in the comic and familiarly moral style, as Raphael was in the serious and sublime. And you may wait many centuries before such another flower blows in *any* climate. I reckon that still, *even in this age*, our island may boast of several geniuses, who, for instance, in portrait perhaps excel every painter in Europe, since the days of Vandyke: to whom unprejudiced posterity may find them at least equal; some perhaps superior. We have some too who are admirable in landscape.—But these geniuses are still alive; and some of them may be seen at a coffee-house, where they look much like other people. A hundred years hence, a connoisseur may probably enough wish to make a journey of a thousand

miles to see them; and would be gloriously happy on his return home, to tell his neighbours he had shook them by the hand. As to history itself, besides some promising specimens of it at home, perhaps even this barren age has produced a genius, not indeed of British growth; unpatronized, and at present almost unknown; who may live to astonish, to terrify, and delight all Europe. But true genius is such an uncommon production of nature, and is so much superior to all quakish arts of recommending itself, that when it does appear, it is no wonder that a generation of people without taste do not know it.

Genius may shoot up in a land quite inhospitable to it; it may perhaps even blossom in the most ungenial season. But the rose-bush that displays its blushing honours in the face of the surly uncomfortable east wind, must have sprung from a root of no small vigour. In a certain island, the fostering indulgences and kind attention which the narcissus, the gilly-flower, the tuberoze, the Cape jessamin, and all the delicate flowers that adorn the garden, deserve and require; are most absurdly and perniciously bestowed upon ragwort, jack of the hedge, priest's what d'ye call it, bishops weed, bearsfoot, nightshade, and henbane.

THE TASTE OF THE PRESENT
AGE.

AMONGST many other distinguished marks of a stupid age, a bad crop of men, I have been told that the taste in writing was never so false as at present. If it is really so, it may perhaps be owing to a prodigious swarm of insipid trashy writers: amongst whom there are some who pretend to dictate to the public as critics, though they hardly ever fail to be mistaken. But their dogmatic impudence, and something like a scientific air of talking the most palpable nonsense, imposes upon great numbers of people, who really possess a considerable share of natural Taste; of which at the same time they are so little conscious as to suffer themselves passively to be misled by those blundering guides.

A Taste worth cultivating is to be improved and preserved by reading *only* the best writers. But whoever, after perusing a satire of Horace, even in the dullest English translation, can relish the stupid abuse of a blackguard rymster, may as

well indulge the natural depravity of his Taste, and riot for life upon distiller's grains.

But the Taste in writing is not, cannot be worse, than it is in music, as well as in all theatrical entertainments. In architecture indeed there are some elegant and magnificent works arising, at a very proper time to restore the nation to some credit with its neighbours in this article; after its having been exposed to such repeated disgraces by a triumvirate of aukward clumsy piles, that are not ashamed to shew their stupid heads in the neighbourhood of Whitehall: and one more, that ought to be demolished; if it was for no other reason but to restore the view of an elegant church, which has now for many years been buried alive behind the Mansion-house.

It is indeed some comfort, that while Taste and Genius happen to be very false and impotent in most of the fine arts, they are not so in all. The arts of Gardening particularly, and the elegant plan of a farm, have of late years displayed themselves in a few spots to greater advantage in England, than perhaps ever before in any part of Europe. This is indeed very far from being universal; and some gardens, admired and celebrated still, are so smoothly regular, so over-planted, and

so crouded with affected, impertinent, ridiculous ornaments of temples, ruins, pyramids, obelisks, statues, and a thousand other contemptible whims, that a continuation of the same ground in its rude natural state, is infinitely more delightful. You must have often seen fine situations ruined with costly pretences to *improvement*. The most noble and romantic situation of any gardens I have seen, is near Chepstow; and the gentleman, who possesses that delightful spot, has shewn great judgment and a true taste, in meddling so little with Nature where she wanted so little help.

This is one happy instance of an admirable situation, where Nature is modestly and judiciously improved, not hurt, by art. An opposite instance of what art, skill, and taste may produce, without any particular advantages of ground or situation, is most agreeably displayed in the royal gardens at Kew. There you find an extent of flat ground, so easily, agreeably, and unaffectedly broken, that you would think it impossible to alter it but to the worse. To pass without any notice the agreeable and the elegant pieces of architecture, which without crouding adorn those delightful gardens; perhaps there is not a physic garden in Europe where any botanist can be more agreeably entertained, as to the variety of curious

plants. But there is something new as far as I know, and particularly ingenious here in the disposition and management of them. Those that naturally delight in the rocks, and the dry hungry soil, are here planted upon ridges of artificial rock-work; where they shew all the luxuriance of vegetation that they could amongst the Alps, the Pyrenees or the Andes. While a very different tribe, the Aquatics, display themselves in a large cistern, where they are constantly supplied with their best and most natural nourishment the rain water, conveyed to them from the eves of the richest greenhouse I have ever seen.

OF THE DRAMATIC UNITIES.

I SUPPOSE few architects will deny that walls, windows, a roof and chimneys, are necessary to a convenient habitation. In my opinion, a strict adherence to the three Unities, as they are established upon the firm foundation of good sense, is not less necessary in the structure of both Tragedy and Comedy; which otherways, especially as represented upon the stage, are irregular, slovenly, blundering, absurd and improbable. And that even *we* are not shocked at the daily trespasses

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against them is owing to custom and Shakespear. But it requires so much art to fill up five acts of a play with the business of one single interesting event; without one scene that is not necessary to forward it; without the least change of place; and without exceeding the time of representation; or even the compass of twelve hours, which is permitted by the courtesy of the critics; that it is no wonder most of our dramatic writers affect to despise rules so difficult to practise.

The three great French dramatic poets, Corneille, Racine and Moliere, have in this article been much more successful than the English: amongst whom, if you except Ben Jonson in three or four of his capital pieces, I am afraid we shall find very few who have built upon a regular plan; which is exactly the same thing to a play as composition is to a history in painting. Shakespear indeed without one perfect plan has perhaps excelled all other dramatic poets as to detached scenes. But he was a wonder!—His deep knowledge of human nature, his prodigious variety of fancy and invention, and of characters drawn with the strongest, truest and most exquisite strokes, oblige you to forget his most violent irregularities. However, to compare two stupendous geniuses in different departments; Shakespear for this mere disregard of plan appears

less perfect than Raphael: who has heightened the truest and most masterly expressions in his various characters by the advantages of a composition the most august and superb imaginable where it was proper; and always the most elegant, easy, happy and natural.

The Samson Agonistes of Milton was it seems recommended by a celebrated prelate to Mr. Pope, as a performance that he might easily mould into a perfect model of Tragedy.—A most desperate task!—For, besides that the dialogue in Samson is for the greatest part dry, metaphysical, pedantic, and reads like a starched, laborious, slavish translation from Euripides; I cannot help thinking, with all due deference to Milton and the B. of Rochester, that the Samson Agonistes is no more to a Tragedy, than a long Farce of one act would be to a Comedy. For the stage, if I remember right, is never once cleared of the persons introduced from the first scene to the last.

OF TRAGEDY AND COMEDY.

NOTWITHSTANDING the opinion of some old critick, that a perfect tragedy is the noblest production of which the human wit is capa-

ble; it has long been a subject of learned dispute, whether a perfect comedy was not the more difficult undertaking of the two. The great majority of judges, who are not always in the right, have I believe still given the preference to comedy in this respect. They tell you that as comedy is a representation of common life, and incidents that are exposed to daily observation, it must be a work of more difficult execution: since most people truly are qualified to judge of what is natural in common life. But are we not equally judges of natural expressions in cases of the most tragical distress? Even in the most exalted personages? What should hinder?—Do the passions operate differently in similar situations according to the different ranks of mankind? A King or an Emperor may upon occasion be as much enraged as a chafed dray-man; only he'll express his anger with more dignity and in more decent language.

It is, no doubt, equally the business of tragedy and comedy to represent life and characters naturally. And we have as good a right to expect true pictures of nature from the one as from the other.

Mean time, I imagine the working up of a good tragedy to be by many degrees the more diffi-

cult and arduous task of the two. Except you think the sublime productions of Raphael required less genius than those of Hogarth; whom I would never be understood to mention but in terms of great esteem and admiration.—How many tolerable comedies have we seen for one tragedy, in which the passions are naturally represented, and exprest with propriety and spirit? Mouthings, big words, turgid unnatural language, and affected sentiments, are nothing to the purpose; instead of moving the passions, they only create contempt and disgust in people of proper feelings. I would ask how many very good comic romances have appeared in the European languages for one tolerable epic poem? Let me ask, again, how many excellent comedians of both sexes have appeared upon the English stage within the memory of many now living, for one that has excelled in tragedy?

As to what Moliere says upon this subject, I think it is in his *Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes*, it amounts to no more than this; that it is much easier to write a bad tragedy than a good comedy: which I suppose will be readily granted.

After all, I believe it must be allowed, that a loud ranting declamatory tragedy, in which nature is perpetually kept at the truncheon's end; with

the assistance especially of magnificent dresses, changes of amusing scenes, altars, sacrifices, processions, public audiences of embassadors, and such other mechanical ornaments as are easily introduced; is much more likely to impose upon the eyes and ears of the multitude than a cold insipid comedy.

OF THE CARELESS HUSBAND.

AS the Careless Husband, tho' it has not appeared upon the stage perhaps once these thirty years, still possesses the first rank amongst our modern comedies, in the opinion of many thousands who have never either read it or seen it represented; I had some time since the curiosity to give it a second perusal; because when I read it many years ago, I could not conceive how it came to be so particularly admired. And now, it does not by any means strike me as the best even of the few modern English comedies with which I have any acquaintance. Sir Charles, the hero, the fine gentleman of the play, behaves rather brutally, and even with a needless, absurd, cruelty to poor Edging; impertinent as she is. What is still worse; in the tender scene between him and Lady Easy, where all art and sincerity ought to be generously thrown aside, he is disingenuous enough to make a merit of parting with a mistress he was

tired of, and from whom he had just disengaged himself. That return of affection to a wife who was once become indifferent to him seems hardly natural, to a man at least of Sir Charles's character; and L. Easy has no great reason to depend much upon it. As to L. Betty Modish; such a flippant coquette does not promise at all to be a happy match, for such an honest sincere enamorado as L. Lovemore; but I hope he will never trust her too long out of his sight; not even with his friend and officious match-maker Sir Charles. In short Sir Charles is no more than a mere man of pleasure, of great indifference and *non chalance*; much such another as Colley was himself. For I had the honour to be a little acquainted with Mr. Cibber; who besides his abilities as a writer, and the singular variety of his powers as an actor, was to the last one of the most agreeable chearful and best-humoured men you would ever wish to converse with.—But to return to Sir Charles; the tenderness he expresses in the forementioned scene, shews a change of character too sudden and too violent to be natural; and is contrived only to serve a purpose in the play.

The sudden change of character in L. Townly in the Provoked Husband, is not less unnatural than that of Sir Charles Easy.—I have good au

thority for it, that Sir John Vanbrugh, who left the play unfinished, never intended any such reformation. And of all the dramatic poets who have appeared in this century, Vanbrugh seems to have had the truest knowledge of human nature: If you except any, it can be none but Fielding; whose admirable Parody upon the modern English Tragedies might alone be sufficient to procure him a high rank amongst the Comic Poets.

OF GLOOMY WRITING.

I HAVE read so little for many years upon any subject that did not immediately concern the political state of the nation; of which every journeyman weaver, taylor, barber, every porter, chairman, coachman, drayman, carman, shoe-cleaner and chimney-sweeper in London ought to make himself master, for the good and safety of the whole; that I am grown quite out of acquaintance with the delights of those writers they call the classics. But, to recollect some juvenile impressions, I used to think that in the works of the best poets, there is generally an air of chearfulness and gaiety; wherever their subject in any degree admits of it. The inferiour geniuses are either insipidly serene; or when they affect the serious and sublime, it is heavy, gloomy and melancholy. Virgil is like

the sun, bright and chearful. Lucan is a subterraneous vault on fire; and when he wants to breathe the open air would be the Stygian lake in a storm, if he could. There is such a gloomy solemnity in most of the writers of that age, with whom I have ever had any acquaintance; that you would think the Sun had always waded thro' a sky of blood in the days of those inhuman Emperors.

OF A LINE IN LUCRETIIUS.

IT cannot be less than thirty years since I have looked into Lucretius; and of the few lines in his elaborate poem that stick to my memory there is one,

Nempe alia quoque sunt; nempe hac sine viximus ante—

that if it was not for other lines, and one particular anecdote, would almost tempt one to imagine he had never been in love. What consolation, I beseech you, can it give a lover dying of his wounds to tell him, *There are others as fair as she; and you lived happily enough before you ever saw her*.—Very true. But this is mere sophistry, and nothing at all to the purpose. For, says the intoxicated lover, I cannot live without this particular sweet creature: of all the sex, she is the only one that can make him completely happy.—How

soon, after possessing this bewitching angel, he may wish to get rid of her, is a question not much to the purpose at present.

OF THE GOOSE PHOENIX.

THIS is perhaps one of the highest curiosities that has ever appeared even at court, either in bag-wig or tye. But as he is rather out of his place here, and deserves a particular description, I intend to exhibit him in my Natural History, which I am preparing for the press, under the article of *Strange Birds*.

OF SINGING.

TALKING of birds, pray how d'ye relish the Italian Singers?—Why really not so much as many *pretend* to do; a great many, a prodigious multitude of all ranks; who resign their own sensations to other people, and dare neither *bear* nor *see* for themselves; who dare not even *eat* or *drink* for themselves. For my part, I am sincere enough to own, that the Singers at the opera seldom give me much pleasure; and least of all while they are warbling out a note, to the length of a league. Besides that I am in pain for their throats, I feel a contemptuous disgust, and a strange disagreeable sensation of shame both for

them and the audience, who never fail to acknowledge those flourishes with the laudest applause. But in almost all Singing, I cannot help lamenting what I think a most material imperfection. A sweet tune, well sung, gives a ravishing grace even to lines, that when you come to read them you are surprized to find how flat and insipid they are; and often how nonsensical. What I complain of is, that few Singers pronounce the words distinctly enough to be understood. They might almost as well sing *Fal al de ral* for ever and ever.

I have reason to suspect, that the most exquisite powers in this way, for want of assurance in those who possess them, are sometimes lost; and remain quite unknown, except to a few of those most familiar friends. This diffidence is only to be regretted. But I can find no excuse for those volunteers in music, who have got that silly, impertinent, disgusting, provoking habit, of humming a tune to themselves in company, my dear honey: and at piquet, cribbage, or quadrille; even at *whist* itself, sing over their cards.

OF A VULGAR ERROR.

I HAVE always considered it as a self-evident absurdity, to imagine that the Scottish tunes were composed by an Italian fidler. But I own that

my opinion upon this subject has begun to totter, ever since it was discovered that the real author of OSSIAN'S Poems was one *Korah Sukkubbit*, Esq. an idle drunken fellow, who some ten or twelve thousand years ago, lived by making and mending of Jews-harps at the borough of *Gomorrhah*, in the country of *Palestine*.—Good God how provoking this is!—Bless your ears! the greatest part of the Scotch, Welsh, and Irish tunes were composed long before the Italians, or even the Flemish knew any thing of music. Excepting *Corelli*, *Pergolese*, and perhaps one or two more distinguishable masters of that charming art; the Italian composers have seldom aspired at any thing beyond mere mechanical harmony; in which any one who has a tolerable ear may succeed. But to express the passions is a different affair: it is one of the greatest powers that belongs to true genius; which happens to be a very uncommon gift of Nature.

Handel was in general a noisy overbearing bully in Music; sometimes indeed, but not often, pathetic.—Yet still charming, as far as mere harmony goes. But it was not in him, still less in *David Rizzio*, a mere old fidler, who only executed what other people had composed, to have even imitated, with any success, the Scottish tunes; whether melancholy or gay; whether amorous, martial, or pa-

floral: in a style highly original, and most feelingly expressive of all the passions, from the sweetest to the most terrible.—Who was it that threw out those dreadful wild expressions of distraction and melancholy in *Lady Culross's Dream*? an old composition, now I am afraid lost, perhaps because it was almost *too terrible for the ear*.—I'll venture to swear that *David Rizzio* was as innocent as any lamb of all such frantic horrors.

OF SOME OTHER VULGAR ERRORS.

SOME people seem to wonder that *Stupidity and Malice* should meet.—So far from being opposite qualities, they are, for the most part, husband and wife. And why should you attempt to separate whom the Devil has joined?

Even of fools afraid.—Is this a just reproach? Pray what animal is so troublesome or dangerous as a fool, whether he is your enemy or your friend?

Why are *Magnanimity and Meekness, Wit and Wisdom*, supposed such extraordinary combinations?—Good sense is surely the solid foundation of true wit: and the truest magnanimity is above all the little turbulence of passion; which is sometimes affected to disguise fear.

A bad heart is by some people supposed almost inseparable from an idle head.—It is quite the contrary: for where the heart is false, the head is never sound. A fool may be honest; but the most plausible knave never yet possessed a sound understanding. In a word, the less moral a man is, the nearer he approaches to an ass.

Mere Vivacity is every day mistaken for Wit: and most people, when you talk of a Wit, suppose it a vain, pert, brisk, impudent, ill-natured creature, that says such things as would be pardonable only to an impertinent child. True Wit is seldom or never petulant: it would rather suppress even a good joke, than give the least uneasiness to any person that is not a fair object of satire.

A serious disposition and a relish of pleasure, are reckoned opposite to one another by the generality of fools; who have not reflection enough to observe that the extasies of pleasure are of all things the most serious. This all sensible women know. The fools of the sex, who are sometimes as voluptuous as their betters, seem often to be out of this secret. But pray who is so grave, or shews such a solemn front as the husband of the herd?—The wether is an insipid whistling fellow to the ram; whose dignified gravity abates, and

becomes less distinguishable; as soon as the genial season is over.—And I have been told by some ladies of very good sense and considerable experience, that the grave rake is the man.

OF CIVILITY.

A FEW days ago, upon accidentally opening an old book, I found the following reflection; “Incivility is not a vice of the soul, but the effect of many vices; of ridiculous vanity, of ignorance, idleness, stupidity, giddiness, contempt of others, of ill nature, and jealousy.”

This I take to be a very just and true account of the various ingredients which compose Incivility.—As to Civility, if I am not mistaken, it is an universal duty; all mankind have a natural claim to it from one another, and without it there can be no intercourse in society, but what is disagreeable, shocking, brutish, and dangerous. Every good-natured generous-spirited person, will practise it for pleasure; every sensible man, whether good-natured or not, for his own convenience and quiet.

End of the First Volume.



